

MAP OF THE BATTLE OF THE FRENCH  
1815.

[Vol. I. Frontispiece.]

# THE LIFE OF WELLINGTON

THE RESTORATION OF THE  
MILITARY POWER OF GREAT BRITAIN

By the Right Hon.

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"Robert Bruce and the Scottish Struggle for Independence,"

&c, &c

WITH MAPS, BATTLE PLANS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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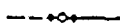
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## VOLUME II

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# THE LIFE OF WELLINGTON.

## CHAPTER I.

### LIGNY AND QUATRE-BRAS

1815.

May 3 1815	Wellington and Blücher assume defensive positions	June 16	Inactivity of the French in the morning Wellington inspects Blücher's position at Ligny And returns to Quatre-Bras Battle of Quatre-Bras The Emperor recalls d'Erlon and the 1st Corps Consequent confusion. Ney's attack on Quatre-Bras Arrival of Picton's division Charge of Kellermann's cuirassiers The French attack finally repulsed Heavy loss on both sides Wellington's narrow escape
June 12 . . .	Napoleon leaves Paris His skilful manœuvres		
„ 14 . . .	Takes up headquarters at Beaumont His plan of campaign		
„ 15 . . .	Crosses the Sambre and captures Charleroi Arrival of Marshal Ney The Emperor gives him command of the left wing And that of the right wing to Grouchy Desertion of the French General Bourmont The situation in Brussels The Duke's orders to the army The Duchess of Richmond's ball		
„ 16 , . .	Wellington rides to Quatre-Bras		

THE Duke of Wellington had an interview with Prince The Allies  
Blücher on 3rd May at Tirlmont, and came to a good assume  
understanding with him \* It had become evident by this defensive  
positions.

\* *D. Dispatches*, xii 345

time that the Allies would have to receive the attack. Although the forces of both Wellington and Blücher were much scattered, covering about one hundred miles of frontier they were more capable of concentration than is apparent at first sight. Each of Blücher's four corps could assemble at its own headquarters within twelve hours, little more would have sufficed to concentrate his whole army at Namur, while in thirty hours it could form line of battle at any point threatened with attack. Wellington's cantonments were more distantly extended, but they formed a segment of a circle round Brussels, whence his reserve could be moved along excellent roads to strengthen any part of the line, upon which two-thirds of his whole force might be concentrated within twenty-four hours. Orders could be conveyed within six hours from his headquarters in Brussels to any part of his army. As early as 30th April, when it first became apparent that the position of the Russian and Austrian armies made it necessary to yield the initiative to Napoleon, Wellington drew up a secret memorandum for the guidance of the Prince of Orange, Lord Hill, Lord Uxbridge,\* commanding the cavalry and Sir W de Lancey the Quartermaster-General.† There were three main routes leading from France to Belgium along which Napoleon might direct his attack—the paved roads of Charleroi, Mons and Tournay. On the first route there were no fortifications, the defences designed for Charleroi not being in an advanced state but those at Mons, Tournay and Ath, formerly destroyed by the revolutionary armies had been repaired, and must have been taken or masked by an enemy invading on either of these routes—a serious consideration for Napoleon, whose army was so greatly inferior in numbers to the Allies. Nevertheless Wellington so confidently expected that he would choose one or both of the more northern roads, that he placed his best troops on the right massing his

\* Afterwards Marquis of Anglesey

† Killed at Waterloo. His rank was that of Deputy-Quartermaster-General but he was the senior in his department.

OUVAIN

Tirlemont

# GENERAL MAP

reproduced from HENRY HOUSSAYE'S  
"CAMPAGNE DE 1815"

BY PERMISSION OF M M PERRIN ET C<sup>IE</sup> PARIS  
AND MESS<sup>RS</sup> A & C BLACK LONDON

SCALE

0 3 6 9 12 Miles

de  
la Chyse

Idoigne

Hanrutt

Embloux

Meuse R.  
Leuke

NAMUR

Meuse R.

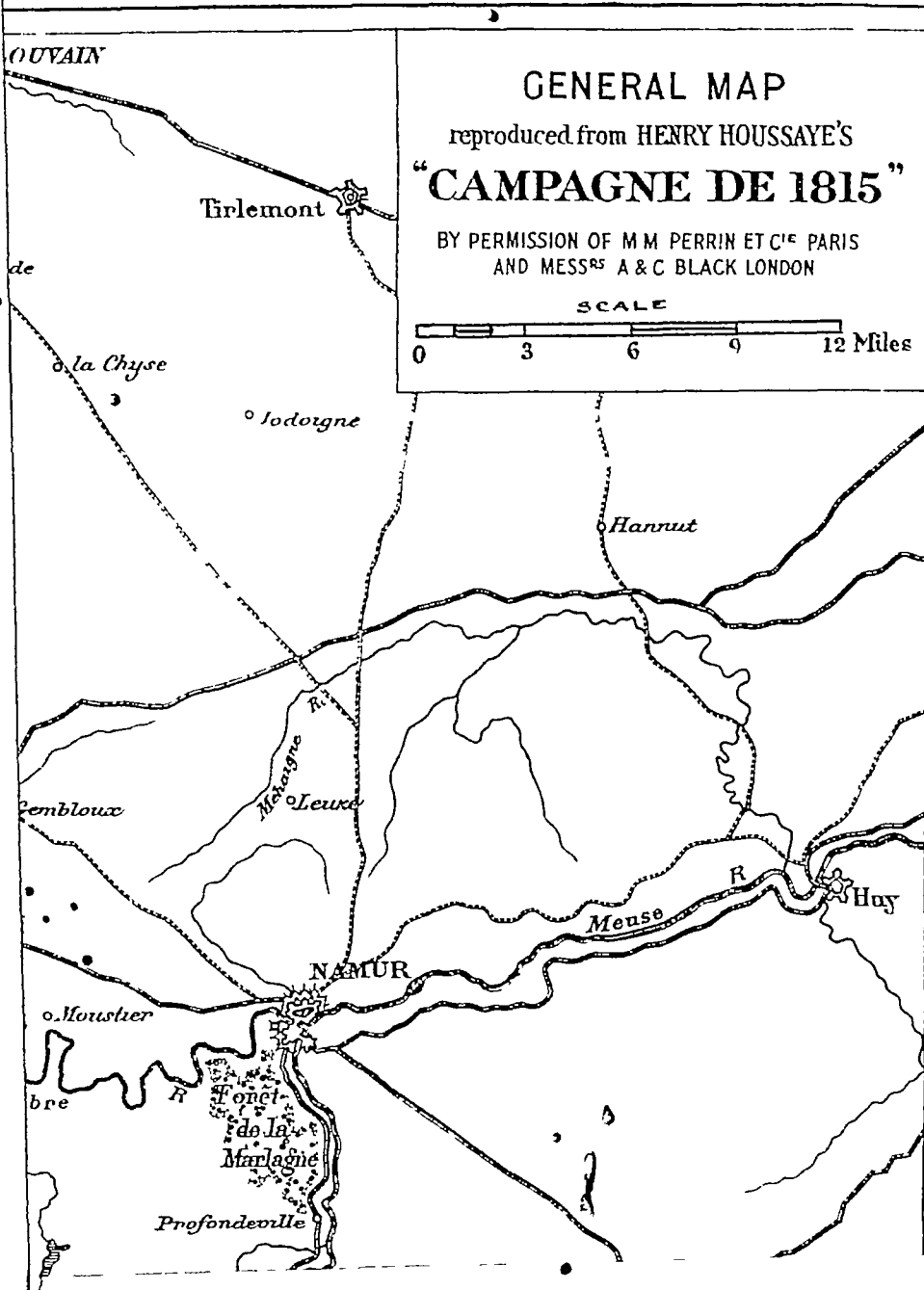
Hay

Moustier

bre

Fonct-  
de la  
Marlagne

Profondeville





cavalry in that direction also, at Ghammont, and moving the Dutch and Belgian divisions to the left of his position next the Prussian right. He was convinced that the attack should have been made by way of Mons rather than by the Meuse and the Sambre, and he maintained that opinion all his life \* ANN 1815

• Up to the latest moment before his final advance Napoleon masked his real intention, by maintaining detachments along the whole Franco-Belgian frontier. The regular troops garrisoning the fortresses were secretly withdrawn and replaced by National Guards, and it was not till 13th June that Major-General Sir Hussey Vivian discovered that he had opposite to him at Tournay, not a French cavalry picket, but a handful of custom-house officials, who made no secret that the army was concentrating at Maubeuge. Napoleon left Paris at daybreak on 12th June, on the 14th his headquarters were at Beaumont, about sixteen miles south of Charleroi, the whole of his forces being well within reach of his personal command. The corps of Gérard, 16,000 strong, bivouacked before Philippeville, forming the right wing. The centre, composed of two corps of the Imperial Guard under Vandamme and Lobau, 66,000 men, lay at Beaumont; and the left wing, composed of 44,000 men of the two corps of d'Erlon and Reille, was posted on the Sambre at Solre-sur-Sambre. On arriving to take command of the army, the Emperor—Emperor not only *de facto* but *de jure*, for his titles had been secured to him when he was interned in Elba—issued one of those stirring proclamations by which he knew so well how to exalt the spirit of his soldiers. Herein Salamanca and Vitoria were but named to recall what evils might happen when he placed the command on lieutenants; on the anniversary of Marengo and Friedland he summoned Frenchmen to revive the glories of Austerlitz and Wagram, of Jena and Montmirail. “To every Frenchman who has a heart,” he cried, “the moment is arrived to conquer or to die!” Skillful  
manœuvres  
by Napo-  
leon

\* See the Duke's memorandum on Waterloo, written in 1846 (*Suppl. Despatches*, v. 513)



Æt 46.  
The  
French  
cross the  
Sambre.

Arrival of  
Marshal  
Ney

The  
Emperor  
gives him  
command  
of the left  
wing

faultlessness of their execution. By the evening of the day after his arrival at Beaumont, Napoleon had led his army across the Sambre captured Charleroi, advanced twenty miles into Belgian territory and bivouacked with 124,000 men disposed in a triangle between the points of Campinaire, Gosselies and Charleroi. Whether such had been Napoleon's deliberate purpose or not, the wedge had been inserted, to be driven home on the morrow. Of his purpose at the moment there is further evidence. During the afternoon had arrived at the French headquarters one who was destined to play a leading part in the events of the next few days. Marshal Ney had been received back into the Imperial service, the Emperor affected to have forgotten the ugly incident of the iron cage but he left him without a command in the army of invasion. Napoleon, however had a kindly feeling for *la bête noire*, as he now called the Marshal, on 11th June he wrote to Davout, bidding him say to Ney that if he wished to be present in the first battles, he must report himself at Avesnes on the 14th. Ney required no second summons, following the Emperor from Beaumont, he overtook him at Charleroi. "Good morning, Ney" was Napoleon's abrupt greeting. "I am glad to see you. You will take command of the 1st and 2nd Corps d'armée. I gave you also the light cavalry of my Guard but do not employ them. To-morrow you will be joined by Kellermann's cuirassiers. Go and drive the enemy along the road to Brussels and take up a position at Quatre-Bras." Read in connection with this the *Bulletin de l'Armée* issued at Charleroi on the evening of 15th June—"The Emperor has given command of the left wing to the Prince of Moskowa (Ney) who has fixed his headquarters at Quatre-Bras on the road to Brussels";—and most people will agree with M. Houssaye that further evidence, as to the Emperor's immediate intention is unnecessary. He meant to force his way to Brussels between the two armies opposed to him and in dictating this order on the evening of the 15th assumed—or pretended to assume—

that Ney had done his part by establishing himself at Quatre-Bras. After giving the left wing to Ney, the Emperor removed Grouchy from command of the cavalry, and verbally gave him the right wing, with instructions to take possession of Fleurus, but, after Gilly had been taken, Vandamme, commanding the 3rd Corps, declared his men were tired, and refused to advance further under orders of the General of cavalry.

ANN 1815.  
—  
And command of the right wing to Grouchy.

Ney, also, failed to possess himself of Quatre-Bras. General de Perponcher, commanding the Dutch-Belgian division on Wellington's extreme left, being convinced that the enemy's attack was no feint, as had been at first supposed, took on himself the responsibility, the Prince of Orange being absent in Brussels, of placing the brigade of Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar at Quatre-Bras, instead of moving it, as he had received orders to do, to Nivelles. Consequently, when Ney's advanced guard arrived late in the evening at Frasnes, they found Quatre-Bras occupied by a Nassau battalion and a battery of horse artillery. The French had been under arms since two in the morning, the very names, still more the characters, of Ney's officers were unknown to him, and, in a happy hour for the Allies, he decided to do no more that night. Had he persevered, it is difficult to believe that the weak detachment before him could have held their position, and the whole character of the campaign must have been altered. That it was not so altered, that the wedge was not driven home that night, was not due to Wellington's dispositions, but to the prompt and unauthorised action of General de Perponcher.

A sinister event marked the opening of the campaign for the 4th French Corps. On the morning of the 15th, General Bourmont, commanding its leading division, deserted to the enemy with his whole staff. Gérard had declared to the Emperor that he would answer for his friend's fidelity with his head. "Cette tête, donc, c'est à moi, n'est pas?" said Napoléon, playfully tapping Gérard on the cheek after

Desertion  
of General  
Bourmont.

Æt. 46. receiving his report of Bourmont's treachery, adding more gravely *mais j'en ai trop besoin.*" On reaching the Prussian headquarters, Bourmont received a cold reception from Prince Blücher who would not deign to speak to the renegade, although he had important intelligence to give.

The situa-  
tion in  
Brussels.

The position of matters at the allied headquarters in Brussels now claims attention. By some misadventure or carelessness, which can never be explained now the Duke of Wellington received no information of the French advance till three in the afternoon. The Prussians had been engaged since four in the morning, General Müffling, who was attached to the Duke's staff, has explained that General von Zieten, as soon as he was attacked, sent an officer off to Brussels, who arrived at 3 p.m., and that he, Müffling, at once apprised the Duke.\* But from Charleroi to Brussels is only thirty miles, how did that officer spend eleven hours on the road? Above all, how did the Prince of Orange, commander of the left wing of the army who ought to have been at the front, happen to be in Brussels, dining with the Duke of Wellington, when the news did at last arrive? Undoubtedly here is ground for the allegation, so indignantly repudiated by those who permit no reflection on their hero's infallibility that Wellington was taken by surprise.

The  
Duke's  
orders to  
the army

Müffling asked Wellington where he would assemble his army observing that Blücher would certainly concentrate on Ligny. The Duke replied that he must wait for advice from Mons before fixing the rendezvous, but that he would order

It well illustrates the value of evidence and, at the same time the kind of despair which almost overwhelms one who wishes to sift out of it the truth, that Sir William Napier the historian of the Peninsular War stated that it was Müffling himself who bore the message from Blücher to Wellington on 1<sup>st</sup> June. "I feel," he begins, that I do not throw away what I am going to tell you, and it is from the Duke's mouth. He then quotes the Duke as having said, "I cannot tell the world that Blücher picked out the fattest man in his army to ride with an express to me, and that he took thirty hours to go thirty miles" (*Waller's Letters* No 1). Müffling of course was in Brussels all day being the Prussian Commissioner at the British headquarters, and received von Zieten's express when it arrived, at last, from the front.

all to be ready to march at a moment's notice. Two hours later the Duke sent orders to his army to concentrate on its left; not on Quatre-Bras, however, where the main road from Charleroi to Brussels passed through his lines, but at Nivelles, seven miles to the west of that road.\* Next, Müffling received a second despatch from the front, from Marshal Blücher this time, announcing that he was concentrating on Sombreffe, close to Ligny. The Duke approved, but still refused to fix his place of assembly before he heard from Mons. ANN. 1815.

"I went to my quarters," stated Müffling, "towards 10, drew up my report, leaving a place for the name of the rendezvous, and kept a courier's carriage ready at my door. Towards midnight the Duke called and told me, 'I have a report from General Dörnberg at Mons that Napoleon has moved on Charleroi with all his force, and that he, General Dörnberg, has nothing in his front. I have therefore sent orders for the concentration of my people on Nivelles and Quatre-Bras.'"†

There is, however, no mention of Quatre-Bras in these after-orders.‡ the movement on Nivelles is confirmed. Yet at that moment Ney's advanced guard lay within two miles of Quatre-Bras, which place, had Wellington's orders been obeyed to the letter, the French might have occupied unopposed.

Readers of *Vanity Fair* (and what English man or woman has foregone the delights stored in Thackeray's masterpiece?) must have acquired a pretty accurate idea of the state of society in Brussels when Napoleon crossed the Belgian frontier. The town was crowded with fashionable non-combatants. Numbers of English families—some drawn thither

English  
visitors in  
Brussels.

\* It is significant of the Duke's disbelief in the genuineness of the attack from the south that some of the movements indicated in the afternoon order are not to take place "until it is quite certain that the enemy's attack is upon the right of the Prussian army and the left of the British army" (*Despatches*, xii. 478).

† *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 510.

Et 10. out of solicitude for relatives in the army others out of simple curiosity and love of excitement—thronged the hotels and lodging houses.

The Duke of Wellington was most intimate with the Duke of Richmond's family, and the unpublished letters of the Rev Spencer Madan, private tutor to the young Lennoxes, contain some interesting particulars of these days.

Brussels, 18th June, 1815.

" Though I have given some pretty good reasons for supposing that hostilities will soon commence, yet no one would suppose it, judging by the Duke of Wellington. He appears to be thinking of anything else in the world, gives a ball every week, attends every party partakes of every amusement that offers. (Yesterday) he took Lady Jane Lennox \* to Enghien for the cricket match, and brought her back at night, apparently having gone for no other object but to amuse her. At the time Buonaparte was said to be at Maubeuge, thirty or forty miles off.

14th June, 1815.

The Duke of Wellington seems to unite those two extremes of character which Shakespeare gives to Henry V—the hero and the trifler. You may conceive him at one moment commanding the allied armies in Spain or presiding at the conference at Vienna, and at another time sprawling on his back or on all fours upon the carpet playing with the children.

'His judgment is so intuitive that instant decision follows perception consequently as nothing dwells long upon his mind, he is enabled to get through an infinity of business without being embarrassed by it or otherwise than perfectly at his ease.

In the drawing room before dinner he was playing with the children, who seemed to look up to him as to one on whom they might depend for amusement. When dinner was announced they quitted him with great regret, saying 'Be sure you remember to send for us the moment dinner is over which he promised to do, and was as good as his word."

Feasting and dancing went on every night, the Duke of Marlborough Peel, younger brother of the Minister Sir Robert Peel.

Wellington had fixed 21st June as the date for a grand ball he intended to give, but the Duchess of Richmond anticipated him by selecting the 15th for her ball. The Duke of Richmond,\* though a general officer, was in Brussels like many other gentlemen, merely as a civilian spectator—an interested one, indeed, for he had three sons in the army; one, Lord March, on the Prince of Orange's staff, another, Lord George, on the Duke's, and a third in the Blues. The Duchess's brother, the last Duke of Gordon, was Colonel-in-Chief of the 3rd (Scots) Regiment of Guards, while the 92nd Gordon Highlanders,† with the 42nd and 79th Highlanders, formed part of the 5th Division stationed as the reserve in Brussels. Desiring to show her foreign guests a Highland reel, the Duchess of Richmond engaged some of the sergeants and privates of the 42nd and 92nd to perform one for their entertainment. Before the summer sun had quenched the ball-room lights, these poor fellows were trudging southwards, some of them never to return.

ANN 1815  
The  
Duchess  
of Rich-  
mond's  
ball

Now it has been asserted that the Duke of Wellington, although perfectly aware of Napoleon's movements, determined to attend this ball in order to reassure people about the safety of Brussels. General Müffling quotes him as having said at midnight, after communicating to him the intelligence from Mons, "The numerous friends of Napoleon (in Brussels) will be on tiptoe, the well intentioned must be pacified; let us therefore go to the Duchess of Richmond's ball, and start for Quatre-Bras at 5 a.m."

\* As soon as Wellington's promotion to Field Marshal gave him seniority over the Duke of Richmond, that nobleman chivalrously offered to serve under his former junior and secretary at the Irish Office—an offer which somewhat embarrassed the Horse Guards, inasmuch as the Duke of Richmond had no experience of active service.

† This fine regiment was raised by the fourth Duke of Gordon towards the close of the eighteenth century. Recruits came in slowly at first, it is said that only about a dozen men had been enrolled, when the Duchess, a celebrated beauty and madcap, undertook to fill the ranks if the recruiting were left to her. She gave out that every man who would take the King's shilling should receive it in his lips from between hers. The story goes that in a very short time the complement was complete.

Æt 46.  
Wellington was  
taken by  
surprise.

Granted, then, that this was the Duke's object in attending a ball at such a moment and permitting his officers to attend it, is there not proof in this that he was not aware of Napoleon's movements? All he knew was what he wrote to the Duc de Feltre at 10 p.m., that the Prussian posts at Thuin had been attacked, but that no news had reached him from Charleroi later than 9 o'clock in the morning, *two hours before it was captured by the enemy*. Picton still lay in Brussels with the reserve of the army under orders to march, indeed, at short notice, but, had Wellington known the condition of affairs at the front, it would have been halfway to Quatre-Bras before the ball began. Had he realised that Napoleon's advanced guard was bivouacked within two miles of the left of his army is it possible that he would have loitered or have permitted the Prince of Orange, to whom that left was entrusted, to loiter among the fiddles and champagne? Is it likely that Lord Hill, commandant of the right wing of the army that Lord Uxbridge, commandant of the cavalry that the Generals Picton, Ponsonby, Clinton, Byng, Cooke, Kempt, Pack, Maitland, and others would have been content to be absent from their divisions and brigades had the truth been suspected? It is perfectly clear from his own despatch that Wellington was completely deceived as to the nature of Napoleon's movements.

'I did not hear of these events (the attack on Thuin) till in the evening of the 16th and I immediately ordered the troops to prepare to march, (and afterwards to march to their left, as soon as I had intelligence from other quarters to prove that the enemy's movement on Charleroi was the real attack.'"

It is not so certain when the real state of the case was revealed to him. Probably it is true, as reported, that news of the capture of Charleroi reached the Duke in the ball room, and that he instructed his general officers to leave the place quietly so as to cause no alarm, and it was then towards

two in the morning of the 16th, that the reserve was called ANN 1815 to arms and marched off; but it is not known certainly whether this took place before, during, or after supper, at which the Duke returned thanks for the toast of the allied army proposed by General Alava\*. Here, at all events, is testimony from the journal of Lady Hamilton Dalrymple—one out of hundreds of persons who scrutinised the Duke's movements and expression on that memorable night

“Although the Duke affected great gaiety and cheerfulness, it struck me that I had never seen him have such an expression of care and anxiety on his countenance. I sat next him on a sofa a long time, but his mind seemed quite pre-occupied, and although he spoke to me in the kindest manner possible, yet frequently in the middle of a sentence he stopped abruptly and called to some officer, giving him directions, in particular to the Duke of Brunswick and Prince of Orange, who both left the ball before supper. Despatches were constantly coming in to the Duke . . . however, we remained till half-past two, and when I left the Duke was still there . . . At four o'clock in the morning . . . I went to the window (it was the finest morning possible). I saw the Highland Brigade marching out to the tune of ‘Hieland Laddie’ . . . a number of British regiments followed, then foreign troops, and at eight o'clock the Duke of Wellington and his staff passed. . . .”

Even when the Duke left Brussels on the morning of the 16th he had not made up his mind that Quatre-Bras, and not Nivelles, was to be the point of concentration, which is clear

\* The late Sir William Fraser was strongly of opinion that he had identified this historic ball-room as still in existence, but the late Dowager Lady de Ros and Lady Louisa Tighe, both of whom were at their mother's ball, were positive that the building had disappeared, and that the site of it is now traversed by the Rue des Cendres. The story, so often repeated, that Lady Louisa Tighe buckled on the Duke's sword before he set out for the front, has been emphatically contradicted by her ladyship herself, who, happily, is still alive. It is a pity that M. Houssaye has marred his fine narrative by giving currency to a tale so misleading as to the Duke's simple character and dislike of display.



Æt. 40.

from the fact that Picton had orders to halt the reserve division at Waterloo where the roads to Nivelles and Quatre-Bras separate. Captain (afterwards General Sir George) Bowles, indeed, in his interesting memorandum of what took place, says that the Duke, before leaving Brussels, had fixed on Quatre-Bras, but the battle which took place a few hours later impressed the minds of men so powerfully with the name of Quatre-Bras that it found its way into subsequent narratives more easily than any other.

"The Prince of Orange came back suddenly, just as the Duke of Wellington had taken his place at the supper table, and whispered some minutes to his Grace, who only said he had no fresh orders to give, and recommended the Prince to go back to his quarters and go to bed. The Duke of Wellington remained nearly twenty minutes after this, and then said to the Duke of Richmond 'I think it is time for me to go to bed likewise, and then, whilst wishing him good night, whispered to ask him if he had a good map in his house. The Duke of Richmond said he had, and took him into his dressing room,\* which opened into the supper-room. The Duke of Wellington shut the door and said, Napoleon has *lumbugged* me, by G——! he has galled twenty four hours' march on me. The Duke of Richmond said, 'What do you intend doing?' The Duke of Wellington replied, 'I have ordered the army to concentrate at Quatre-Bras, but we shall not stop him there, and if so, I must fight him *here* (at the same time passing his thumb-nail over the position of Waterloo). He then said adieu and left the house by another way out. He went to his quarters, slept six hours, and breakfasted, and rode at speed to Quatre-Bras. The conversation in the Duke of Richmond's dressing room was repeated to me two minutes after it occurred by the Duke of Richmond, who was to have commanded the reserve, if formed and to whom I was to have been aide-de-camp. He marked the Duke of Wellington's thumb-nail with his pencil on the map, and we often looked at it together some months afterwards."†

It was the study

† *Letters of the first Earl of Malmesbury* B. 413. The map was lost when the Duke of Richmond went to Canada.

No orders for the movement of troops on the 16th, or for ANN 1815 their concentration upon any point towards the allied left, Wellington's are extant, subsequent to the after-orders issued at 10 p.m. orders to the army on the 15th, except those instructions dated 16th June, published in *Despatches*, xii. 474, to which the editor, Colonel Gurwood, appended the following note:—

"The original instructions issued to Colonel de Lancey (Deputy-Quartermaster-General) were lost with that officer's papers. These memorandums of movements have been collected from the different officers to whom they were addressed."

Now these memoranda are five in number,\* four being addressed to Lord Hill and one to Major-General Sir J. Lambert, and it is singular that those writers who have founded upon them the theory that Wellington, before leaving

\* (1) *To General Lord Hill, G.C.B.*

"16th June, 1815

"The Duke of Wellington requests that you will move the 2nd Division of infantry upon Braine-le Comte immediately. The cavalry has been ordered likewise on Braine-le-Comte. His Grace is going to Waterloo."

(2) *To the same*

"16th June, 1815.

"Your Lordship is requested to order Prince Frederick of Orange to move, immediately upon receipt of this order, the 1st Division of the army of the Low Countries, and the Indian Brigade, from Sotteghem to Enghien, leaving 500 men, as before directed, at Audenarde."

(3) *To the same*

"Genappe, 16th June, 1815

"The 2nd Division of infantry to move to-morrow morning at daybreak from Nivelles to Quatre-Bras. The 4th Division of infantry to move at daybreak to-morrow morning to Nivelles."

(4) *To the same*

"16th June, 1815

"The reserve artillery to move at daybreak to-morrow morning, the 17th, to Quatre-Bras, where it will receive further orders."

(5) *To Major-General Sir J. Lambert, K.C.B.*

"16th June, 1815

"The brigade of infantry under the command of Major-General Sir J. Lambert to march from Assche at daybreak to-morrow morning, the 17th, to Genappe, on the Namur road, and to remain there until further orders."

*Æt.* 46. to the front at an early hour on the 16th, he would have found nothing before him but Prince Bernhard's Dutch brigade, but at 10 o'clock Ney's troops were not even under arms.\*

In like manner if Napoleon had brought up his right into line with his advanced posts—if in short his army had bivouacked overnight in line of battle instead of in line of march—only one of the four Prussian corps, General Zieten's, was in position at Ligny to oppose him. Pirch I.'s, on the march from Namur had only got as far as Onoz and Mazy six miles from Ligny. Thielemann's was at Namur fifteen miles off, whereas the fourth Prussian corps, Bülow's, was still at Liège, sixty miles distant. Napoleon had only to form his line of battle to the front early on that morning, and he would have brought 120 000 men to crush one Prussian corps d'armée and one Belgian Dutch brigade. Then he might have turned to demolish the British and Prussian forces as they arrived in succession. Instead of this, no effort was made to bring up the rear divisions from Charleroi and Châtelet till nearly midday on the 16th, when three-fourths of the Prussian army had assembled at Sotbrefe and Ligny and the attack was put off till the afternoon. Ney on the left timing his movements by the Emperor's, could but keep up an ineffective skirmish with his advanced guard, wasting the precious hours while the British were assembling before him. *Aliquando dormitant*—Wellington's unpreparedness, or if that be too harsh a term, his miscalculation on the 15th, was neutralised by Napoleon's inertness on the 16th and thus the two greatest commanders of their age each inaugurated by a false move their first encounter with the other.

When Wellington perceived that all was quiet in front of Terpongher's division he wrote the following letter to Prince Wücher —

"On the heights behind Frasne.

ANN 1815

"June 16, 1815 10 30 a.m

"MY DEAR FÜRST,—My army is situated as follows The Corps d'Armée of the Prince of Orange has a division here and at Quatre-Bras, and the rest at Nivelles. The Reserve is in march from Waterloo to Genappe, where it will arrive at noon. The English cavalry will be at the same hour at Nivelles. The corps of Lord Hill is at Braine-le-Comte. I do not see any large force of the enemy in front of us, and I await news from your Highness and the arrival of troops in order to determine my operations for the day. Nothing has been seen on the side of Binche, nor on our right.

"Your very obedient servant,

"WELLINGTON." \*

After inspecting the Prince of Orange's position, the Duke, Wellington accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Sir Alexander Gordon, and two or three orderlies, rode over to inspect that of Blücher at Ligny, where he met Lieut-Colonel Sir Henry Hardinge,† British Commissioner at the Prussian headquarters

"On the morning of the 16th I left Brussels and rode forward about five miles beyond Quatre-Bras to see the Prince of Orange's outposts.‡ After that, I went over to the Prussians about seven miles to our left from Quatre-Bras, and found them drawn up on the slope of the ground with their advanced columns close down to the rivulet of Ligny, the banks of which were so marshy that the French could only cross it at the bridges of three or four villages that lie along its course. I told the Prussian officers, in presence of Hardinge, that, according to my judgment, the exposure of the advanced columns and, indeed, of the whole army to cannonade, standing as they did displayed to the attack of

\* This letter, quoted by Ropes (p 106) from Von Ollech's history, was not published till 1876. It will be noticed that the position of the cavalry has been altered since the order sent to Lord Hill (see p 15)

† Afterwards Field-Marshal Viscount Hardinge, G C B

‡ He cannot have ridden due south, or he would have been landed within the enemy's outposts at Frasnes

the enemy's fire, was not prudent.\* The marshy banks of the stream made it out of their power to cross and attack the French, while the latter, on the other hand, though they could not attack them, had it in their power to cannonade them, and shatter them to pieces, after which they might fall upon them by the bridges at the villages. I said that if I were in Blücher's place with English troops, I should withdraw all the columns I saw scattered about in front, and get more of the troops under shelter of the rising ground. However they seemed to think they knew best, so I came away very shortly. It all fell out exactly as I had feared—the French overwhelmed them, as they stood, by a prodigious fire of artillery and I myself could distinguish with my glass from Quatre-Bras a general charge of the French cavalry on their confused columns, in which charge it was that Blücher was ridden over and near killed "†

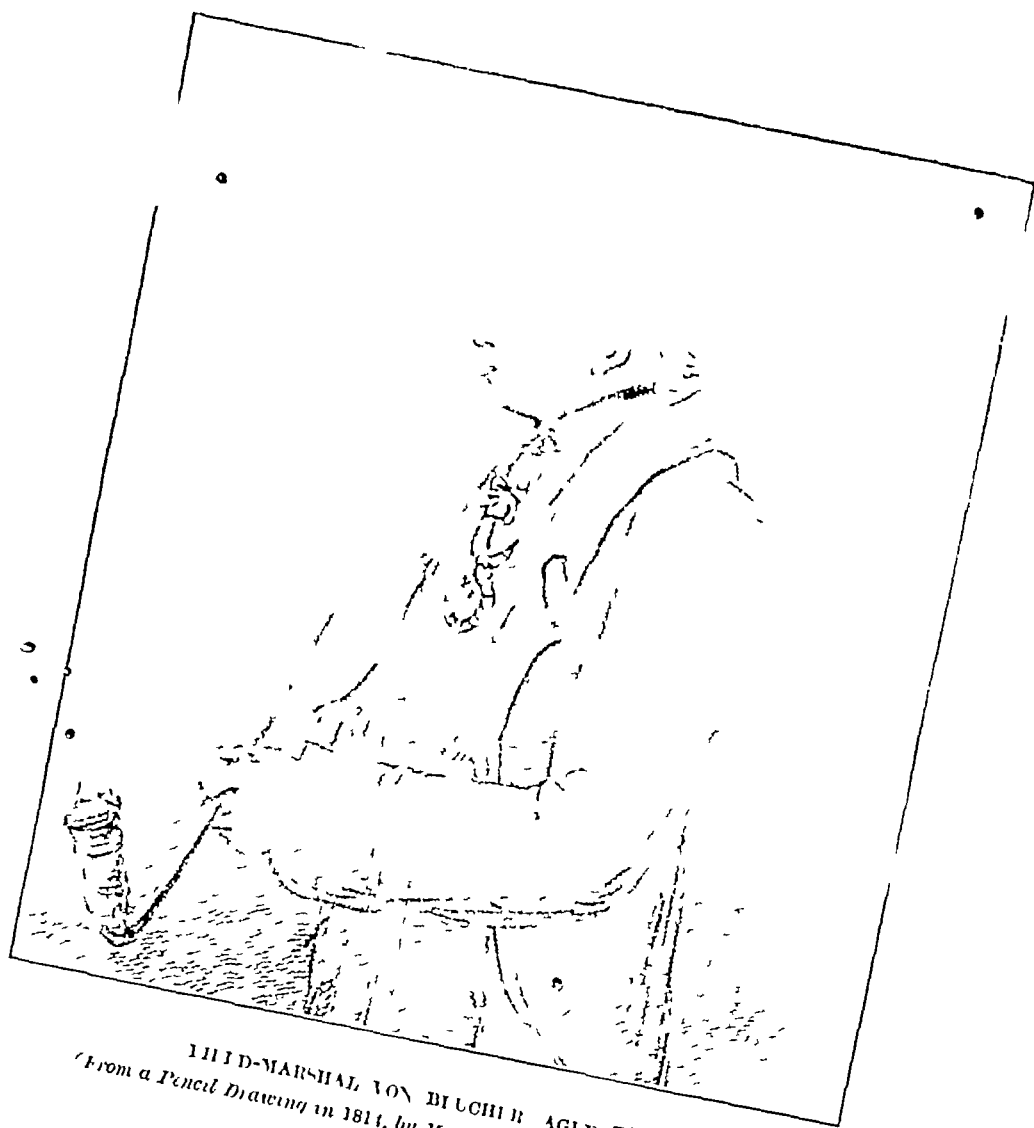
And  
returns to  
Quatre-  
Bras.

It has often been asserted that Wellington gave Blücher an unconditional promise of support, and that this decided Blücher to receive battle. Wellington, as has been shown, did not anticipate much trouble on that day at Quatre-Bras, and no doubt expected to be able to support Blücher when his own troops had collected. But his engagement was by no means unconditional. Muffling reports his last words as being—"Well, I will come, provided I am not attacked myself." As soon as he returned to Quatre-Bras, which he reached at half past two or three o'clock, the Prince of Orange informed him that the French were in force in the wood before him, but that he did not expect they would advance that afternoon. At that moment loud cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* were heard, taken up in succession by brigades, and a loud voice could be heard distinctly crying—"L'Empereur récompensera celui qui s'avancera!"

"That," observed the Duke, "must be Ney going down the

\* "If they fight here" said the Duke to Hardinge they will be *decimally* mauled (*Stanhope* 109).

† *De Ros MS.*



FIELD-MARSHAL VON BLÜCHER AGED 72  
From a Pencil Drawing in 1814, by Major-General Barrett (London)  
[1814] p 20



line I know what that means ; we shall be attacked in five ANN 1815, minutes " \*

And so it was. Immediately afterwards the French columns debouched from the wood in fine order, with drums beating, the Prince of Orange withdrawing his advanced light troops and guns before them † As Wellington sat watching the enemy, he was surprised to see that instead of both corps, 40,000 or 50,000 strong, advancing against him, one of them, that opposite his own left, was moving off sharply to its right in the direction of Ligny This, though it gratified him at the time, also puzzled him exceedingly ; and the explanation was not apparent till many days later It was this In fixing 2 30 p.m. as the hour for Grouchy's attack on the Prussians at Ligny, the Emperor ordered Ney to fall on the Prince of Orange at the same time, to sever the British communication with Mons and Ostend, and to meet the Emperor at Brussels at seven o'clock the following morning The Emperor, with the Imperial Guard in reserve, undertook to keep his eye on the movements of both Grouchy and Ney's columns, and support either according to the turn of affairs—"je me porterai sur l'une ou l'autre aile selon les circonstances." ‡ But at 3 15 p.m., after three orders had been despatched to Ney directing him to carry Quatre-Bras, the Emperor, through Soult, sent him a fourth, more urgent than the rest, commanding him to support Grouchy by directing his attack on the right flank of the Prussians at Ligny "The fate of France is in your hands, therefore hesitate not a moment to move according to the Emperor's commands, and direct your march upon the heights of Saint-Amand and Brye."

\* Houssaye describes Wellington as considering the situation at this moment as critical, and almost hopeless, but he misinterprets the meaning of a phrase used in the Duke's letter to Lady F. Webster "We fought a desperate battle" (Suppl. Despatches, x. 501) English readers will perceive the difference between a desperate battle and a desperate situation (compare vol. i p. 56, note)

† *Dè Ros MS*, Croker, iii 173

‡ The Emperor's letter to Ney, 16th June Napoleon sent nine despatches on this day (*Houssaye*, 185)

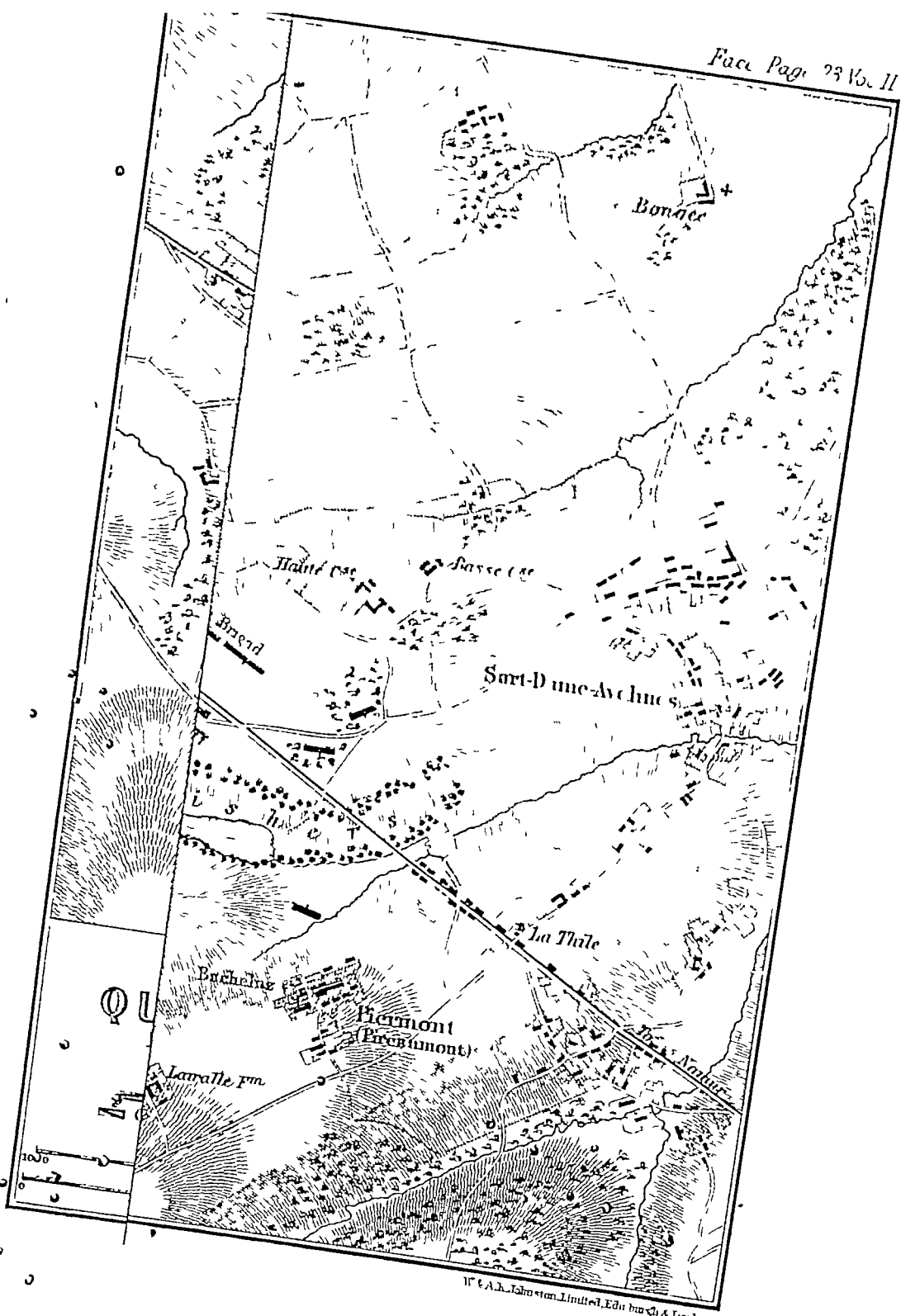


Æt 48.

Colonel Laurent, charged to carry this pencilled command to Ney rode round by Gosselies. Fifteen minutes after he started Napoleon despatched another officer Colonel de Fortin Janson,\* with orders direct to d'Erlon, commanding him to move upon the eminence of Saint-Amand and fall upon Ligny "Monsieur le Comte d'Erlon," the note ended, "you are about to save France and cover yourself with glory!" D'Erlon would gladly have exchanged this fine peroration for greater clearness in his instructions. *Portez vous à la hauteur de Saint Amand*—was not the intention *sur la hauteur*? Forbin-Janson, an officer of but a year's experience, could throw no light on the meaning. He had ridden a shorter route than the messenger to Ney and d'Erlon received his orders *three-quarters of an hour* sooner than Ney. He carried them out to the letter. Instead of marching upon the height of Saint-Amand—*sur la hauteur*—he advanced on a line with that hamlet—*à la hauteur*—sending Delcambre, the chief of his staff, to inform Ney of the change in his destination. Up to five o'clock Ney was under the delusion that d'Erlon was supporting him on the right, but at that hour Delcambre reached him with d'Erlon's message announcing his change of direction. Five minutes later Colonel Laurent rode up with the Emperor's order of 3.15 to Ney whose fury was without bounds. The balls from a British battery were ploughing up the ground round him. "Ah! these English balls," he cried, "I wish they were all in my belly." He sent Delcambre back with positive orders to support Reille in his attack on Quatre-Bras, then in full progress.

It was too late. When Delcambre rejoined d'Erlon at six o'clock, the 1st Corps was almost within cannon shot of Saint Amand and in full view of the Prussians. D'Erlon had to choose between continuing the movement in compliance with the Emperor's direct command and obeying the

\*Gosselies 201 where a minute analysis is undertaken of the cause of the confusion. Mr. Roques (p. 18\*) disbelieves in the Emperor's direct order to d'Erlon, but M. Houssaye produces convincing evidence in support of it.





imperative recall of his immediate superior. The soldier's ANN 1815 duty seemed clear: he countermarched his columns, and, leaving Fleurus which he had approached within two miles, began the return to Quatre-Bras which was three times as far off. By no fault of its commander the whole energies of the 1st Corps d'Armée, which, rightly directed, had been irresistible at Quatre-Bras, was dissipated in fruitless oscillation between the two battle-fields \*

Ney had begun his attack about three o'clock with a furious onset upon the farm of Gémioncourt, situated on the Charleroi-Brussels highway. The fields were so deep with rye that it was difficult to make out the exact positions of friend or foe, a condition all in favour of the Allies, as concealing their real weakness; for in truth the Duke began this action with no more than 7,000 infantry and 16 guns, against 15,000 or 16,000 French. Gémioncourt, weakly defended by a detachment of Nassau troops, was speedily taken, and Prince Jérôme's division on the French left drove the Dutchmen out of the wood of Bossu. These two important points gained, Ney ordered a general advance. The conflict grew warm on the allied left at Piermont, and the superior numbers of the enemy soon began to prevail, until the 5th Division,† under

\* Wellington's criticism on Napoleon's generalship on this occasion was severe and just. "I wonder what they would have said of me if I had done such a thing as that. I have always avoided a false move. I preferred being too late in my movement to having to alter it" (*Salisbury MSS*, 1838).

† The divisions of the British army had been re-numbered since the close of the Peninsular war. On 15th June, the day before the battle of Quatre-Bras, Wellington had consulted his Generals as to their desire to have them restored to the old order. Had there been time to effect this, Sir Thomas Picton's division, the 5th, would have become again the 3rd, so long and gloriously associated with his name.

Peninsular Numbers.	Waterloo Numbers	Generals
1 (the Guards)	1	General Cooke
2	4	Sir C. Colville
3	5	Sir T. Picton
4	6	Sir L. Cole
5	3	Sir C. Alten
6	2	Sir H. Clinton

(*Despatches*, xii 470).

Æt 46. old Picton, opportunely arrived from Brussels 7,200 strong. Soon the Brunswick corps nearly 7,000 marched in from Nivelles, and the Nassau contingent 6,900 making, with 1,200 of Van Merlan's horse, a total of some 22,000 Allies. By five o'clock Ney who had begun the fight with overpowering superiority of numbers was in turn outnumbered by 6,000 or 7,000. Nevertheless the Allies were at a great disadvantage in regard to cavalry. Lord Uxbridge's division had been directed to advance from Ninove till the rear of the column had crossed the high road from Mons to Brussels, but, owing to a misapprehension of the order they were halted as soon as the head of the column touched it.\*

The rest of the afternoon was spent in a series of encounters of exceeding severity the course of which it is very difficult to follow. Personal impressions of every battle are confined to each man's sphere of observation, at Quatre-Bras the spheres of all men were unusually limited. Besides the deep corn, which concealed the infantry there was the wood of Bossu, masking the attack of the enemy's left, and the successive arrivals of Wellington's forces render the sequence of events more than usually confusing. It must be confessed that there were departures as well as arrivals. Many of the Belgians and Dutch were Buonapartist at heart, others were indifferent or disaffected nearly all believed Napoleon to be invincible. Thus it came to pass that the 2nd Dutch-Belgian Division, upwards of 7,000 strong, who had held such a brave front under the Prince of Orange in the fore part of the day tired of the sport before evening, and quitted the field almost to a man. The chief feature of the fight was the steady endurance by British infantry of the repeated charges by French cavalry. Picton, to relieve the pressure on the squares of the 42nd, 44th, 79th, and 92nd, actually charged the French cuirassiers and lancers with the Royals the 28th and 32nd Regiments. Ney had forfeited all the advantage he enjoyed in the morning he had prov<sup>d</sup> in

anticipation the truth of Napoleon's verdict uttered at ANN. 1815 St Helena, "Ney n'était plus le même homme" Still he was proud and brave: he held in his hand the Emperor's billet—"le sort de la France est entre vos mains" He knew that he was outnumbered before the heads of the 1st (Guards) Division, and the 3rd (Alten's) Division appeared about six o'clock coming up from Nivelles. mad with rage at the Emperor and chagrin at his lost opportunity, he must wrench victory even at the last hour. He sent for Kellermann.

"My dear General," said he, "the safety of France is at stake. We must make a supreme effort. Take your cavalry and fling yourself upon the English centre. Crush them!—ride them down!"

War-worn Kellermann was not the man to blench at such an order, nevertheless he pointed out that the enemy was now 25,000 strong, and that he had with him only a single brigade of cuirassiers, the other three brigades being far to the rear, in accordance with Ney's own commands.

"What does that matter?" roared Ney, above the thunder of the guns. "Charge with what you have, ride them down! I'll support you with all the cavalry I have. Go, go, I tell you!" \*

Ten minutes later Kellermann's trumpets sounded the charge. In column of squadrons, eight hundred steel-clad Charge of Kellermann's cuirassiers horsemen thundered down upon Sir Colin Halkett's brigade. The first battalion, the 69th Regiment, was forming square in compliance with instructions from their Brigadier, when an officer of high rank rode up and asked what they were about.

"Preparing for cavalry, sir," was the reply, "by the Brigadier-General's orders."

"Oh, cavalry be d——d! There's none within miles of you. Reform column, sir, and deploy at once" \* \*

Thus fresh order was in the act of being carried out when

*Houssaye, 207, quoting Kellermann's narrative in the French Archives de la Guerre*

Æt 46.

the cuirassiers swept upon the column, rode through it, and carried off the regimental colour \* The 30th and 38th stood firmly in their squares, shoulder deep in rye, the cuirassiers rode past them scattered the Belgian and Brunswick cavalry and penetrated as far as Quatre-Bras completely turning the allied position. On the left of Quatre-Bras the banks were lined by the 92nd Highlanders and some Hanoverians. The Duke of Wellington, dismounted, stood on the left of the Highlanders, then, moving round to the rear of the line, called out, "Don't fire, ninety-second, till I give you the word!" When the cuirassiers were within thirty yards he gave the order for a volley which told with terrific violence, completely stopping and repulsing the attack,† and Kellermann, being unsupported, drew off in great disorder with the loss of one-third of his brigade. Reinforcements were arriving in quick succession to the Allies, when Ney received positive orders from the Emperor by the hand of Colonel Baudas that, happen what might to the left wing, d'Erlon was without fail to march to his right‡ Ney was on foot, having had two horses shot under him, and, more like a madman than a cool headed soldier began rallying his broken infantry and leading them against Pack's Highlanders, continuing the hopeless combat till nearly nine o'clock. Then he drew off, having been sacrificed by his master's interference with d'Erlon, but, in Napoleon's opinion, not sacrificed in vain. The 1st Corps had been neutralised, the 2nd beaten, yet in the Emperor's larger view the day had not been lost. On the contrary his object had been attained, he had severed the armies of Blücher and Wellington and kept them apart, while he inflicted a severe defeat on the Prussians at Ligny—

The 69th only brought one colour on the field, having lost the other at the disastrous affair of Bergen-op-Zoom in the previous year

‡ *Waterloo Letters*, p. 380.

‡ "Il faut absolument que l'ordre donné au comte d'Erlon soit exécuté, quelle que soit la situation où se trouve le maréchal Ney. Je n'attache pas grande importance à ce qui passera aujourd'hui de son côté. L'affaire est tout-à-fait perdue, car je veux en finir avec l'armée prussienne" (*Horvay* 212, quoted *Baudas M.R.*).

the last and not the least characteristic in the long roll of ANN 1815. Napoleonic victories. Had the positions of the two commanders been reversed, it may be safely said that Wellington, even at the price of attaining an important advantage, would never have compromised one of his Generals by withdrawing from him half his force at the moment of attack—would never have declared that “he attached little importance” to what befell that General.

On the other hand, it must be freely admitted that if Ney had shown ordinary alacrity in the morning and collected his forces in time to carry out the Emperor's earlier orders, he could have spared d'Erlon perfectly well, have cut to pieces or driven away the weak detachment of Perponcher, and probably no serious attempt would have been made to hold the position of Quatre-Bras against him. It was owing to Ney's culpable laxity that there was any battle of Quatre-Bras to be recorded.

The following is a return of the loss to the Allies, so far as known, in killed, wounded, and missing.—

'	British	.	.	.	2,275
'	Hanoverians	.	.	.	369
'	Brunswickers	.	.	.	819

3,463 officers and men.\*

Of the casualties among the Dutch and Belgian troops no separate return could be made, most of them having deserted the field in the afternoon, spreading news of the total defeat of the Allies. The loss of the French was officially stated at 4,300 †

\* *Siborne*, i 160. Of the British regiments, the Highlanders suffered most severely, but, to judge from the following passage in a letter written from Brussels on 17th June by Lady Georgina Lennox (afterwards Lady de Ros) to Lady Georgina Bathurst, they were not of sufficient importance to cause much concern to the fashionable ladies in that town. “Thank God, my dearest G, all our friends are safe. There was a general action yesterday evening, the Guards were not engaged. Poor Sir D Pack is severely wounded, and the poor Duke of Brunswick died of his wounds. The Scotch were chiefly engaged, so there are no officers wounded that one knows.”

*Houseage*, 218.



ÆT 46.

Narrow  
escape of  
Wellington.

The Duke of Brunswick fell at the head of his good Black Brunswickers, whose sable uniform and silver death's-head and crossbones bore witness how the duke's father had fallen in like manner commanding his hussars at the Battle of Jena. At the time Brunswick was killed, Wellington himself was in great peril. The Brunswick infantry which had replaced the troops of Nassau in the first line, gave way under a charge of French cavalry. Wellington rode up with the Brunswick hussars to cover them, but these also fell into disorder under a heavy fire of musketry and fled before a charge of Piré's "red lancers." Wellington galloped off, closely pursued, and, arriving at a ditch lined by the Gordon Highlanders, called out to them to lie still. He set his horse at the fence and cleared it, bayonets and all.

Another incident in this hard day's work, harder than most men younger than the Duke would care to undertake on the morrow of a ball,\* may be told in Wellington's own words.

"It was that same evening that I saw one of the strangest chances I ever recollect. A French regiment of cuirassiers, I suppose 600 or 700, came dashing up the Charleroi road to Quatre-Bras for the purpose of a reconnaissance—just where the Namur road forms the quatre bras, there are some farm houses there, and also a large farm yard with a gate into the road. I had posted some infantry in the ditches at the cross-way and these cuirassiers, being checked by their fire, turned off the head of their column into the gateway of the yard. I was looking attentively at their proceedings with my glass, in fact I was not more than a quarter of a mile distant and, seeing they all followed into the gateway I naturally concluded they had some way out at the back of the farm yard, by which they had

The Duke had ridden from Brussels five miles beyond Quatre Bras, 10 miles then 7 miles to Liguy and back, 43 miles in all, before the battle began, and remained in the saddle till nightfall. Colonel the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby arriving late at night with his brigade of cavalry found the wearied troops fast asleep in their bivouac, but Wellington was sitting in his tent, and looking over the contents of some English newspapers which had just arrived. This was the Iron Duke!

retired upon their army along the skirt of the wood. But to ANN 1815.  
 my great surprize on looking again, about ten minutes afterwards,  
 in the same direction, I saw them all rushing out full gallop at  
 the gateway, and returning by the very road they had come.  
 They lost several men by our infantry firing from their ditches,  
 but the main body escaped well enough. It seems that when  
 they found there was no outlet from the farm yard into which  
 they had so heedlessly turned, without knowing the place in the  
 least, they quietly got into order, and seeing we took no notice  
 of them, waited a quarter of an hour and then effected their  
 escape in the manner I tell you. Had we but thought it possible  
 they were there, we might have captured every man without  
 fail." \*

About ten o'clock that night, Wellington sent his aide-de-  
 camp, Sir Alexander Gordon, who had been in the saddle  
 since early morning, with an escort of two squadrons of  
 the 10th Hussars, to find his way to the Prussian head-  
 quarters. Riding as far as Sombreffe without hindrance, he  
 found General von Zieten's headquarters still in that village,  
 and the ground on which the Prussians had been beaten in  
 the morning was occupied only by a few French videttes  
 which he drove off†. Blucher, the 4th Prussian Corps not  
 having arrived, had been so much weakened by his defeat  
 that he had been obliged to retire in the night upon Wavre.

Napoleon, whose constant practice it was to calculate the  
 future or the unknown by a percentage of chances,‡ was  
 almost sure that Blucher would retire upon his base on the  
 Rhine, but, while overrating the extent to which the  
 Prussians had suffered in the battle, he underrated their  
 staunch old Marshal's fidelity to Wellington.

\* *De Ros MS*

† *Ibid.*

‡ A good example of this mental habit may be seen at the beginning of the  
 Peninsular war, when Napoleon reckoned the odds in favour of Bessières at Rio  
 Seco as 20 to 25, and those of Dupont at Baylen as 80 to 20

## CHAPTER II.

THE SEVENTEENTH OF JUNE.

1815

June 16, 1815	Confusion in Brussels. Was Wellington surprised by Napoleon?	June 17	Great rain-storm. Strength of the allied army
" 17	Wellington retreats from Quatre-Bras. Napoleon's inactivity and its cause. His orders to Marshal Grouchy Cavalry action at Genappe. Napoleon's energy in pursuit.		Strength of Napoleon's army Wellington's communications with Blücher He decides to receive battle. Blücher assures him of support.

Confusion  
in Brussels.

MANY vivid descriptions have been given of the panic and confusion caused in Brussels by the fugitive Belgian and Dutch soldiers. The sound of artillery had been borne distinctly to the town on the sultry air

' At first I was utterly incredulous, I could not—would not believe it, but, hurrying to the Parc, we were too soon, too uncontestably convinced of the dreadful truth, by ourselves hearing the awful and almost incessant thunder of the guns apparently very near us. Late as it was we went to see Mrs. H., whom we knew to be in great alarm. We found her sitting surrounded by plate, which she was vainly trying to acquire sufficient composure to pack up with a face pale with consternation, and quite overcome with agitation and distress. My brother had engaged horses, upon the condition of their being in readiness to convey us to Antwerp at a moment's warning by day or night.

if required. . . . Thinking it prudent to be prepared, we had sent our *valet-de-place* to *la blanchisseuse* to desire her to send home everything belonging to us early in the morning. *La blanchisseuse* sent back a message—'Madame,' said the valet, 'the *blanchisseuse* says that if the English should beat the French, she will iron and plait your clothes, and finish them for you, but if, *au contraire*, these vile French should get the better, then she will assuredly send them back *tout mouillés* early to-morrow morning' . . . Great alarm continued to prevail all through the night, and the baggage wagons stood ready harnessed to set off at a moment's notice. . . . At six o'clock we were roused by a violent knocking at the room-door, accompanied by cries of '*les François sont ici ! les François sont ici !*' Starting out of bed, the first sight we beheld from the window was a troop of Belgic cavalry galloping from the army at the most furious rate, through the Place Royale, as if the French were at their heels; and instantly the whole train of baggage wagons and empty carts, which had stood before our eyes so long, set off full speed by the Montagne de la Cour, and through every street by which it was possible to effect their escape . . . No language can do justice to the scene of confusion which the court below exhibited, masters and servants, ladies and stable-boys, valets and soldiers, lords and beggars, Dutchmen, Belgians and Britons, bewildered *garçons* and scared *filles-de-chambre*; enraged gentlemen and clamorous coachmen, all crowded together, jostling, crying, scolding, squabbling, lamenting, exclaiming, imploring, swearing and vociferating, in French, English and Flemish, all at the same time. Nor was it only a war of words, the disputants had speedy recourse to blows, and those who could not get horses by fair means endeavoured to obtain them by foul. The unresisting animals were dragged away half-harnessed. The carriages were seized by force, and jammed against each other. Amidst the crash of wheels, the volleys of oaths, and the confusion of tongues, the mistress of the hotel, with a countenance dressed in woe, was carrying off her most valuable plate in order to secure it, ejaculating, as she went, the name of Jesus incessantly, while the porter, with a red night-cap on his head, and the eternal pipe sticking mechanically out of one corner of his mouth,

ANN 1815

Æt 40. — was standing with his hands in his pockets, a silent statue of despair”\*

Next morning Lady Hamilton Dalrymple notes in her journal—

“17th June.—I again got up a little after four o'clock. What a different sight from the morning before! An uninterrupted chain of carts going helter-skelter—carts with wounded soldiers—Belgian regiments seeming to be without any discipline or control—all pouring into the town, wounded soldiers lying upon the pavement, having got as far as the town, but unable to crawl further—the dismay was universal. The morning was fine, but about one o'clock the most dreadful storm of thunder and lightning I ever recollect came on. We were obliged to shut the shutters.

Lord Apsley came to me with a message from the Duke of Wellington to say he had been obliged to retreat to the last position before he gave up Brussels, that he hoped to be able to retain it, but as it was very uncertain, he advised us to have horses quite ready and all our things packed up. During the whole evening and night the rain fell in torrents. I do not remember for a continuance of so many hours having ever seen it so heavy, it was exactly as if pitchers of water were pouring down.

“18th June.—At six in the morning we procured horses and set off to Antwerp. The road was nearly blocked.”

D'Erlon's corps rejoined Ney after the cessation of fighting on Friday evening, but the weary British were not disturbed in their bivouac that night.

Was Wellington surprised by Napoleon?

Any attempt to review the incidents and results of the fighting on the 16th is impossible without referring to the heated controversy which has raged round them. Setting aside the extreme advocates of the Duke's infallibility (for it is clear that but for Ney's inactivity in the morning and the dislocation of his attack in the afternoon, the allied position

\* *The Days of Battle, or Quatre-Bras and Waterloo, by an Englishman resident in Brussels* (London, 1833), pp. 26-40.

must have been easily forced), there remain only three ANN 1815 conclusions deserving consideration

First · that the Duke of Wellington was actually surprised by Napoleon's advance across the Sambre

Second assuming that he was not surprised, that his tactics were faulty in neglecting to concentrate earlier on his left at Quatre-Bias, and that by selecting Nivelles as the rendezvous, seven miles west of the Chaileroi to Brussels road, compromised both armies by admitting between them the head of Ney's corps d'armée

Third · still assuming that his dispositions were so complete that he cannot be held to have been taken by surprise, that his adversary outmanœuvred him by a rapid and masterly concentration opposite the weakest point in the line of defence.

Wellington himself was always, as might be expected, exceedingly reticent on the subject. Although he never admitted that he had been surprised, except in the conversation in the Duke of Richmond's dressing-room,\* he never denied it in any of his writings. He was on the watch, for we have his own assurance that from the moment he knew that the French were on the march, until he quitted Brussels on the morning of the 16th, he never went twenty yards from his own quarters, so as to be sure to receive the first intelligence coming from the front † He was watchful enough, but not in what proved to be the direction of danger. The following extract from his strictures on Clausewitz's criticism of himself contains the key to the idea which dominated the whole of his dispositions, even after he knew of Napoleon's arrival on the frontier, and the concentration upon Maubeuge and Valenciennes, ‡ up to, and even after, the very morning of Waterloo

"The Duke of Wellington's letters, published by Colonel Gurwood, afford proofs that he was convinced that the enemy ought to have attacked by other lines than by the valleys of the

\* See p 14, *supra*

† *Salisbury MSS, de Ros MS*

‡ *Suppl Despatches, v 436-481, passim*

... at the last moment ... be conceived ... upon Hal. ... whether ... the position at ... thinking that, from ... would have taken a wiser ... have reached the high-road ... and have turned the right of ... It is obvious that the Duke ... movement."

... at once that Wellington ... of Quatre-Bras open in order ... upon Brussels, should expose ... on either side. The whole work ... the error of the 15th by ... forces to prevent ...

... then, to ... which one is shut up in ... one is forced to admit th ... unmaneuvered and ... although the blame for it ... not, but on von Zieten ... of the 15th or on von ... who must have lost ... Wellington ... skill, matched his ...

the ... of W ... laid, ... only, ... the ... who ... away!"

... in this paper fairly ... more than ... of the ... at Quatre-Bras ... the truth of ... a slip of ...

of Belgium, timed the arrival of nine corps, distributed ANN 1815. between Lille and Metz, to coincide exactly with that of the Imperial Guard from Paris, and selected for that concentration the weakest part in the allied lines, must surely be credited with having outmanœuvred his opponent. Up to that point, Napoleon's conduct of the campaign was as masterly and brilliant as anything in his military career. Five years later Wellington frankly described it to Charles Greville as "the finest thing that ever was done—so rapid and so well combined." \*

Imagine a parallel case arising in modern autumn manœuvres. A red force is to guard the approach to Derby of a blue force coming from the west of England. Railroads are barred; the only means of locomotion are the soldier's legs. There are four routes by which the invasion may be made—the high-roads through Northwich, Newcastle-under-Lyne, Stafford, and Lichfield. The red general has made up his mind that his blue adversary will choose the route by Stafford, at the same time keeping his army distributed along the frontier, ready to concentrate at any point threatened. His army consists of two corps, the 1st under General A——, with headquarters at Stafford; the 2nd under General B——, with headquarters at Lichfield. The blue general withdraws his best troops from their cantonments opposite Northwich, Newcastle-under-Lyne, and Stafford, and concentrates them rapidly to the south of Lichfield, replacing them with some militia battalions, without the red general being aware of what is going on. One afternoon, General B—— rides into Derby and informs the red general that, early in the morning, the enemy had approached his outposts in great force, but so little serious did he think the movement that, instead of sending word thirty miles back to Derby, he had brought it himself, which would, and does, enable him to attend the county ball in Derby that night. General A——, commanding the 1st Army Corps, has also left his headquarters

\* Greville, i. 39



Æt. 46. and has gone eighteen miles to his rear. We must do the same. I suppose they'll say in England that we have been licked, well, I can't help that.

About ten o'clock orders were issued for the army to retire by successive brigades through the defile of Genappe into the position of Mont-Saint-Jean in front of Waterloo. The Duke, retaining with himself the cavalry and two battalions of the 95th Rifles having sent out his orders, read some letters and papers which had arrived from England, and then lay down on the roadside having covered his face with a newspaper and fell asleep.\* Awaking after a short nap, he rode down in front of Quatre-Bras, looking about through his glass, and expressing his surprise at the perfect quietness of the enemy. "It is not at all impossible," he said, "that they may be retreating."

Why was Wellington allowed so much time to begin his hazardous retreat? For two reasons. In the first place, Ney deeply incensed with the Emperor for having interfered with d'Erlon's column at the most critical moment of his attack, had made no report of the failure of his own operations on the 16th. It was not till the Emperor's aide-de-camp Count Flahault, returned to Fleurus about 8 o'clock a.m., on the 17th that Napoleon learnt the truth, and was told also that Ney knew nothing about the result of the battle of Ligny. Even then, late as it was, it was not too late to have attacked Wellington with immensely superior forces—Wellington, whom Napoleon had imagined was long since in full retreat upon Brussels—but there was another circumstance which interfered. A great deal has been written, said, and surmised about the state of Napoleon's health at this time. In mental vigour it has been alleged that he was not equal to the victor of Austerlitz and Marengo—a suspicion which his conduct during the days from 12th to 16th June ought surely to dispel. Nevertheless these days had been a time of incessant mental and physical strain. Since daylight on the 12th,

Cause of  
Napoleon's  
inactivity

when he started from Paris, the Emperor had taken little ANN 1815. repose. He was suffering from a painful, but not a dangerous, malady, which made riding disagreeable exercise; he had grown stout, and was not capable of such long-continued bodily exercise as the Duke of Wellington underwent with impunity; but there is the testimony of General Foy that "he retained all the vigour of his mind, and his passions had lost little of their strength." On the morning of the 17th, when there was every reason for prompt and vigorous action, the Emperor's movements were leisurely and undecided—the loitering of a weary man

"To-day," he directed Soult to write to Ney about 8 a m, "will be needed to terminate this operation (viz the occupation of Quatre-Bras), to supply ammunition, bring in stragglers, and call in detachments. Give your orders accordingly; and see to it that all the wounded are cared for and taken to the rear. We hear complaints that the ambulances have not done their duty"

The Emperor had ordered overnight that the cavalry of Pajol and Exelmans should follow the Prussians and ascertain whether, as was probable, they were retreating on their own base at Liége and Namur, or whether, possibly, they would fall back so as to unite with Wellington for the defence of Brussels. About nine o'clock he left his quarters at Fleurus and rode upon the battlefield of Ligny, visiting the wounded and passing along the ranks of his troops paraded *without arms* in front of their bivouacs. Then he dismounted and discussed at length with Grouchy and other officers, not the prospects of the campaign, but, strangely enough, the course of politics in Paris. It was nearly eleven o'clock before it was reported to him that the troops at Quatre-Bras were not, as he had supposed, and as was the fact, merely Wellington's rear-guard, but his whole force on the ground. Not before that hour did he decide to support Ney in a fresh attack on Quatre-Bras with Lobau's 6th Corps and the whole Imperial Napoleon's orders to Grouchy.

Ex. 48. Guard. At the same time he committed a corps of 24,000 men and 96 guns to Marshal Grouchy giving him verbal orders to pursue the Prussians in the direction of Namur\*.

The Duke's retreat.

About two o'clock in the afternoon, the Duke, riding about with Sir Hussey Vivian in front of Quatre-Bras saw the glitter of steel in the sun, and, turning his glass on the field of Ligny perceived heavy masses of the enemy moving upon his own position.† Simultaneously the French under Ney began to show themselves in front for the first time, just as a heavy rain-storm was spreading over the sky. The sun of Austerlitz was about to be obscured, but the French position was still brilliantly illuminated only on Quatre-Bras and the land to the north the storm twilight had descended. The Duke at once ordered the 95th and the cavalry to fall back steadily along the road to Brussels, and trotted on himself to get some dinner which had been prepared for him in Genappe. The storm had broken by this time, Lord Uxbridge had opened fire with his guns upon Napoleon himself and his staff, a battery of horse artillery of the Guard replied, the reverberation shook the heavens a deluge of rain began which all witnesses agree in describing as without parallel in their experience.

Cavalry action at Genappe.

The Duke was hardly seated at table when word came from Lord Uxbridge that he was hard pressed, and required the presence of the Commander-in-chief. The Duke, mounting at once, galloped back to the high ground before Genappe, where he found the 7th Hussars in much disorder having been repulsed with loss and refusing to follow their officers to a fresh attack. Wellington brought up the Life Guards.

No incident in this campaign has given rise to greater controversy than the exact nature and sequence of the successive orders to Grouchy and the degree of Grouchy's responsibility for what followed. In the present narrative I am not concerned to balance nicely the evidence affecting the character of a French marshal, and shall endeavour to state merely the bare facts as they appear to have borne on the fortunes of the Prussian and Anglo-Dutch armies. Those who wish thoroughly to understand the question should have recourse to the admirable narratives of Mr. Roques and M. Houssaye.

† *De Roeux* &c.



LE MARCIIAL GROUCHY  
n

[101 u p 40



who charged the enemy with success, and delivered the 7th ANN 1815. from an awkward predicament, for they had lost all formation, were jammed in the streets and defile of Genappe, and could not retire because of the dense column behind them.

Having checked the forward movement of the enemy, Wellington carried off Lord Uxbridge to share his dinner. He afterwards expressed the opinion that the retreat of the cavalry "would have been as uninterrupted and easy as that of the infantry had been in the morning, had not Lord Uxbridge taken it into his head to make that attack on the French lancers as they were coming out of Genappe, which ended so disastrously for the 7th Hussars" \*

Napoleon, who rode at the head of the advanced guard throughout the pursuit, was present in this affair, and certainly betrayed no traces of the inactivity he had shown in the morning Napoleon's activity in the pursuit

"One ought to have been witness," says the author of *Napoléon à Waterloo*,† "of the rapid march of this army on the 17th—a march more like a steeplechase than the pursuit of a retreating enemy,—to realise the energy to which Napoleon knew how to inspire troops under his immediate command. Six pieces of the horse artillery of the Guard, supported by the *escadrons de service*, marched in the first line, and poured grape on the masses of the enemy's cavalry as often as, taking advantage of some accident of ground, he endeavoured to halt, take position, and check our pursuit. The Emperor, mounted on a small and very active Arab horse, galloped at the head of the column, he was constantly close to the guns, stimulating the gunners by his presence and his words, and more than once he was in the thick of the shells and balls which the enemy's artillery poured on us."

The "extraordinary rain soon rendered the going very difficult over the cultivated land, which became one continuous swamp. This told in favour of the British, who were

\* *De'Ros MS*

† An officer of the Imperial Guard, who remained near the Emperor all

Æt 46. far the lighter column, the rest of the allied army being already in position before Waterloo

It rained in such a way as I never saw either before or since it seemed as if the water were tumbled out of tubs. The ground was so soft that at every step our horses sank halfway to the knees, and in several places where we passed over fallow land, it had the appearance of a lake, the rain falling upon it faster than it could be absorbed or run off.\*

Strength  
of the  
allied  
army

It was nearly seven o'clock before Napoleon's advanced guard brought up on the elevated plateau in front of the position chosen by Wellington at Mont-Saint-Jean. General Picton opened fire with twelve guns on the head of the French column, which, being unable to retreat owing to the pressure behind, suffered for about half an hour. Two French horse batteries made reply till the British fire ceased by order of the Duke. By this time the Anglo-Dutch army had assembled to the number of 67 661 of all arms, with 156 guns† In addition to these, the Duke, always haunted by apprehension of a turning manœuvre on the part of the French, thought it expedient to keep a corps of observation at Hal, wholly detached, and thirteen miles to the west of his position at Mont Saint-Jean. This corps consisted of 17,500 men, being some brigades of the 4th Division under General Colville and the corps of Netherlanders under Prince Frederick of Orange, who was directed on the 17th to defend the position between Hal and Engelen "as long as possible."‡ This force which might have been employed with advantage on the 18th remained inactive on the whole of that day. The army in position before Waterloo was of very uneven material, largely composed of militiamen and young soldiers. It was made up as follows:—

*Hamilton 318.*

† *Edwards* l. 460. Brialmont gives a slightly larger total having apparently made no allowance for the losses on 16th and 17th June.

‡ *Despatches*, xii. 4 6.

British . . .	24,991	ANN 1815
King's German Legion	5,824	—
Hanoverians . .	11,220	
Brunswickers	4,962	
Nassau Contingent . . .	2,880	
Dutch-Belgians . .	17,784	
	<hr/>	
	67,661 men.	

Against these Napoleon brought into the field, after detaching the two corps under Grouchy, 71,947 men. The discrepancy between the actual numbers on either side was scarcely enough to affect the prospects of the impending conflict, being, indeed, to a great extent only apparent, owing to the British returns including only effective rank and file, and non-commissioned officers, whereas the French always included in their returns officers, musicians, etc. But the French had a great superiority in cavalry, of which they had 15,000 of the best, and in artillery, having 246 guns. The general quality of the infantry, also, was far superior to that of the Allies, for Napoleon's old campaigners had flocked to the eagles, forming a homogeneous, seasoned body of troops—the finest army in Europe. Of this disparity in quality the Duke was well aware, he never concealed his dissatisfaction with the quality even of his British troops, and always said that "he started with the very worst army that had ever been got together"\*. He acknowledged, however, that four or five of his old Peninsular battalions acted as a very rapid leaven on their young countrymen. The whole of the Hanoverian troops were militiamen, except some veteran battalions of the King's German Legion, and the Nassau men, though seasoned troops, actually fired on the Duke when, in the course of the battle of Waterloo, he attempted to rally them†.

Despite the consciousness of these disadvantages, the Duke

\* *Palmerston's Journal*, p 13

† *Ibid*, p 14. These three Nassau battalions were the same which had come over to the British from Soult's army during the operations round Bayonne in 1813.



Æt 46. far the lighter column, the rest of the allied army being already in position before Waterloo

' It rained in such a way as I never saw either before or since; it seemed as if the water were tumbled out of tubs. The ground was so soft that at every step our horses sank halfway to the knees, and in several places where we passed over fallow land, it had the appearance of a lake, the rain falling upon it faster than it could be absorbed or run off.'\*

Strength  
of the  
allied  
army

It was nearly seven o'clock before Napoleon's advanced guard brought up on the elevated plateau in front of the position chosen by Wellington at Mont-Saint-Jean. General Picton opened fire with twelve guns on the head of the French column, which, being unable to retreat owing to the pressure behind, suffered for about half an hour. Two French horse batteries made reply till the British fire ceased by order of the Duke. By this time the Anglo-Dutch army had assembled to the number of 67,661 of all arms with 156 guns† In addition to these, the Duke, always haunted by apprehension of a turning manœuvre on the part of the French, thought it expedient to keep a corps of observation at Hal, wholly detached, and thirteen miles to the west of his position at Mont Saint Jean. This corps consisted of 17 500 men, being some brigades of the 4th Division under General Colville and the corps of Netherlanders under Prince Frederick of Orange, who was directed on the 17th to defend the position between Hal and Enghien "as long as possible. ‡ This force which might have been employed with advantage on the 18th, remained inactive on the whole of that day. The army in position before Waterloo was of very uneven material, largely composed of militiamen and young soldiers. It was made up as follows:—

\* Hamilton MSS.

† *Essex* i. 460. Drialmont gives a slightly larger total, having apparently made no allowance for the losses on 16th and 17th June.

‡ *Despatches* xii. 476.

British . . . . .	24,991
King's German Legion . . . . .	5,824
Hanoverians . . . . .	11,220
Brunswickers . . . . .	4,962
Nassau Contingent . . . . .	2,880
Dutch-Belgians . . . . .	17,784

ANN 1815

67,661 men

Against these Napoleon brought into the field, after detaching the two corps under Grouchy, 71,947 men. The discrepancy between the actual numbers on either side was scarcely enough to affect the prospects of the impending conflict, being, indeed, to a great extent only apparent, owing to the British returns including only effective rank and file, and non-commissioned officers, whereas the French always included in their returns officers, musicians, etc. But the French had a great superiority in cavalry, of which they had 15,000 of the best, and in artillery, having 246 guns. The general quality of the infantry, also, was far superior to that of the Allies, for Napoleon's old campaigners had flocked to the eagles, forming a homogeneous, seasoned body of troops—the finest army in Europe. Of this disparity in quality the Duke was well aware; he never concealed his dissatisfaction with the quality even of his British troops, and always said that “he started with the very worst army that had ever been got together.”\* He acknowledged, however, that four or five of his old Peninsular battalions acted as a very rapid leaven on their young countrymen. The whole of the Hanoverian troops were militia-men, except some veteran battalions of the King's German Legion, and the Nassau men, though seasoned troops, actually fired on the Duke when, in the course of the battle of Waterloo, he attempted to rally them.†

Despite the consciousness of these disadvantages, the Duke

\* *Palmerston's Journal*, p 13

† *Ibid*, p 14 These three Nassau battalions were the same which had come over to the British from Soult's army during the operations round Bayonne in 1813

Æt 46. of Wellington had chosen his own battlefield,\* and was resolved to fight, but to the last moment, even when Napoleon's divisions were taking up their positions in his front he was doubtful where the battle would take place. On the morning of the 17th, as soon as he discovered that Napoleon had neglected to occupy the field of Ligny he had sent word to Blücher saying that he was about to fall back on Mont-Saint-Jean, and would give the French battle there, provided he had the support of one Prussian corps. Blücher however had been badly hurt in the battle of Ligny. Charging at the head of his cavalry his horse was shot under him he was twice ridden over by the French cavalry and was believed to be killed or taken. He was carried, however to the village of Mellery where he spent the night in great pain and discomfort, in a little house crowded with wounded men. He was seventy two years of age, and, being badly bruised, had to resign the command temporarily to his Chief of the Staff, Gneisenau. Now Gneisenau's confidence in Wellington had been grievously shaken on the previous day. When the Duke rode over to the Prussian headquarters on the morning of the 16th, not anticipating any serious work that day at Quatre-Bras, he undoubtedly did give a conditional assurance that he would support Blücher in the battle then imminent "provided I am not attacked myself." From this, taken in conjunction with a letter written to Blücher by Wellington three hours previously on his first arrival at Quatre-Bras in which he said, "I do not see any large force of the enemy in front of us, and I await news from your Highness and the arrival of troops in order to determine my operations for the day" † Gneisenau certainly

Gneisenau's distrust of Wellington.

The position occupied by us at Waterloo will attract many a John Bull who will wonder why the devil that should be called a position, and return about as wise as he came. The Bean (a nickname borne by the Duke in the campaign) has a better eye for he fixed upon it last summer (see p. 282, supra) in case of necessity to fight an action in the neighbourhood of Brussels, supposing the enemy to advance by the road he did; and one close to Hal, in case he advanced by Mons. (Dumouriez MSS).

† This letter was first published by Von Ollech in 1870.

had drawn the inference that Wellington was not a man to ANN 1815  
 be relied on. On the morning of the 17th he was very —  
 imperfectly acquainted with the course affairs had taken at  
 Quatre-Bras, and he held the English General responsible for  
 the defeat of the Prussians at Ligny \*. Nevertheless he was  
 unwilling at first to renounce all communication with the  
 Anglo-Dutch army. While Blücher was disabled, Gneisenau  
 took the important responsibility of ordering the 1st and 2nd  
 Prussian corps (Zieten and Pirch I) to fall back on Wavre  
 instead of preserving the line of Namur; but on the 17th,  
 when Blücher gallantly resumed the command in spite of  
 his bruises, Gneisenau advised him to look after his own  
 safety by falling back on Liége, and securing his communi-  
 cation with Luxembourg †. Blücher, however, was too staunch  
 to desert his ally, supported by his Quartermaster-General  
 Grolmann, and acting in a spirit which can never be too highly  
 admired, he ordered the concentration of the whole of his four  
 corps d'armée upon Wavre. But at noon on the 17th, when  
 Wellington's message arrived at Blücher's headquarters at  
 Wavre, it was not known where the 3rd and 4th Prussian  
 corps (Thielemann and Bülow) had got to; moreover, the  
 reserve of ammunition had not come up. It was not, there-  
 fore, till shortly before midnight on the 17th, when Bulow's  
 arrival at Dion-le-Mont had been notified, that Grolmann  
 wrote Blücher's reply to Wellington, to the effect that Bulow  
 would move at daybreak by Saint Lambert to attack the  
 French right, supported by Thielemann, and that Zieten and  
 Pirch I would conform with their corps. It must have been  
 about daybreak on the 18th before the Duke got this valuable  
 assurance, ‡ and it implies no little hardihood on his part

Blücher  
keeps  
tryst

\* It is admitted now on all hands that Blücher's decision to accept battle at Ligny was wholly independent of any assurance of support from Wellington, though no doubt he wished and hoped for it (see *Ropes*, p. 145).

† *Stanhope*, 110

‡ The story that the Duke, after seeing his troops into their bivouacs at Mont-Saint-Jean on the evening of the 17th, rode over to Wavre and received personal assurance from Blücher of his support on the morrow, seems to belong to the

Æt. 46. — that, before receiving it, he had resolved to stand his ground, because, for all he knew it was a perfectly possible thing that he might the next morning be assailed by a hundred thousand men,"\* his information being that not more than 12,000 or 15 000 men had been detached under Grouchy to follow the Prussians

Wellington  
was  
anxious  
about his  
right.

Still the Duke would not bring in Prince Frederick's corps from Hal, and two letters written by him at 3 a.m. on the morning of the 18th, from his quarters in the village of Waterloo, betray considerable uncertainty and anxiety as to the course which events should take. The first of these is to the Duc de Berri, who was with the King of France at Ghent.

'It is possible that the enemy may turn us at Hal, although I have Prince Frederick's corps in position between Hal and Enghein. If that happens I beg your Royal Highness to march on Antwerp and canton yourself in the neighbourhood, and to inform his Majesty that I pray him go from Ghent to Antwerp by the left bank of the Scheldt not on false rumours, but on receiving certain intelligence that the enemy has entered Brussels, in spite of me, by turning me at Hal.' †

The second is to Lady Frances Webster in Brussels, for the Duke was not unmindful, even on the eve of battle, of the safety and even the comfort, of his English friends there.

category of myth. Mr. Roepes, in his third edition (pp. 238-242), has carefully examined the evidence in support of it, and dismissed the story as a fallacy, although in previous editions he had expressed his belief in its truth. It is to be noted that the Duke who had no possible reason for concealing the truth in this matter never alluded to his alleged ride on that night of terrible rain, although he used to delight in discussing such incidents in his warfare. It is impossible," says Greville (2nd series, ii. 41), "to convey an idea of the sort, easy, frankness and abundance with which he talked and told of his campaigns."

Roepes 235.

† Despatches, xii. 477

"MY DEAR LADY FRANCES,—As I am sending a messenger to ANN 1815. Bruxelles, I write to you one line to tell you that I think you ought to make your preparations, as should Lord Mountnorris, to remove from Bruxelles to Antwerp in case such a measure should be necessary . . . The course of the operations may oblige me to uncover Bruxelles for a moment, and may expose that town to the enemy; for which reason I recommend that you and your family should be prepared to move on Antwerp at a moment's notice. . . .

"Believe me, etc ,  
"WELLINGTON.

"Present my best compliments to Lord and Lady Mountnorris" \*

Many critics, from Napoleon downwards, have blamed the Duke for giving battle in such a position as Mont-Saint-Jean, whence, if beaten, it has been considered that he could not have retreated through the dense forest of Soignes upon Brussels. M. Thiers, also, in his *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, started the false idea, afterwards taken up by other writers, that the Duke's base of operations was Brussels. It was nothing of the kind, he had his headquarters there, but his base was Ostend and the coast. No doubt his chief object was to protect the capital of the Netherlands, but it will be observed that, in the letter last quoted, he speaks of the possibility of having to "uncover" it—not to retire upon it. That such was his intention was clearly explained at the dinner-table of Mr Littleton (afterwards Lord Hatherton) at Teddesley, where the Duke was staying on 8th December, 1825.

"After dinner the conversation turned on the battle of Waterloo, and on those French writers who maintained that it ought never to have been fought on that ground at all, as, if beaten, the Allies could not have retreated through the forest of

\* *Suppl Despatches*, x 501.

Br. 48 Saignes. The Duke, speaking with much earnestness, said that  
 — was a mistake.

‘I knew every yard of the plain beyond the forest, and the road through it. The forest on each side of the *chaussée* was open enough for infantry cavalry and even for artillery, and very defensible. Had I retreated in that direction, could they have followed me? The Prussians were on their flank, and would have been on their rear. The co-operation of the Prussians in the operation I undertook was part of my plan, and I was not deceived. But I never contemplated a retreat on Brussels. Had I been forced from my position, I should have retreated to my right, towards the coast, the shipping and my resources. I had placed Hill where he could have lent me important assistance in many contingencies, of which this was one. Again I ask—if I had retreated on my right, could Napoleon have ventured to follow me? The Prussians, already on his flank, would have been on his rear. My plan was to keep my ground till the Prussians appeared, and then to attack the French position, and I executed my plan.

As the party left the room, Croker remarked I never heard the Duke say so much on this subject before. “\*“

Note by Lord Hatherton *Apsey House MSS.*

# CHAPTER III.

## WATERLOO

18th June, 1815.

8 a.m .	. Position of the allied army		Repulse of Durntze's column at Papelotte
	*The advanced posts of La Haye, Papelotte, La Haye Sainte, and Hougoumont	11 a.m —7 p.m	Well sustained defence of Hougoumont
8—9	. Napoleon prepares to attack.	3 30 p.m	. Second attack on La Haye Sainte
10	. The Emperor's first order to Grouchy	4—6 . . .	. Ney attacks with the cavalry.
	The French order of battle	4 30	. Bülow's Prussian corps enters the field
11	. Having marshalled his line of battle, the Emperor returns to Rossomme	5 . . . .	. Engages Lobau's 6th corps, and carries Plancenoit
11 30	. Attack on Hougoumont		Lord Hill moves up on the right
1 p.m . .	. Bulow's corps appears on the French right		Critical position of both armies
	* The Emperor's second order to Grouchy	5 30—7 30	. Plancenoit taken and retaken
1 30	Ney receives the order to attack	7 30 .	Zieten's Prussian corps begins to operate on the French right
2 .	. Advance of d'Erlon's corps d'armée		Final attack on the Allhes
2 15	Bylandt's Dutch brigade is broken		
	Donzelot is repulsed by Kempt's brigade	8 . . .	. Defeat of the Middle Guard
2 30	Death of Sir Thomas Picton		General advance of the Allhes
	* Marcognet is repulsed by Pack's brigade		*Rout of the French
2 40	Charge of the Union Brigade	9 .	Meeting of Wellington and Blücher
2 45	. Death of Sir William Ponsonby	Appendix D	The Duke's Conversation about Waterloo
2 40	* Charge of Lord E Somerset's brigade	Appendix E	. The Defeat of the Imperial Guard



146. "THE people of England may be entitled to accurate account of the battle of W objection to their having it, but I do object to their informed and misled. I am really disgusted with of all that I have seen (written) of the battle of number of writings upon it would lead the world the British army had never fought a battle before, not one which contains a true representation, transaction, and this is because the writers have quoted (to stories picked up from peasants, private vidual officers, etc.) instead of to the official sources

Twenty years later after examining Major Siborne's of Waterloo, now in the United Service Institution, the made this confession "It is very difficult for me of the particular position of each body of troops command at any particular hour"† Again "the details of the battle might be left to the original reports. Historians and commentators were not "There is one event," he said to Lord Mahon, the world—the battle of Waterloo—and you will any two people agree as to the exact hour when menaced."§ He used to say that he was read so many conflicting descriptions of the would soon begin to believe he was not there himself.

*F. M. The Duke of Wellington to Walter Scott,*

"Paris, 28th August,

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the ing the battle of Waterloo. The object which you yourself is very difficult of attainment, and, if really

\* Letter from the Duke to Sir J. Staclair 20th April, 1826 *Despatches*, x. 507).

† *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 518.

‡ *Ibid.*, 508.

§ *Stanhope*, 86. The Duke himself seems scarcely to have official despatch (*Despatches*, xii. 481) he says "about 11—12 o'clock." to Walter Scott (*Ibid.*, 508) he says "at eleven."

|| In the published despatches this name is left blank

is not a little invidious. The history of a battle is not unlike ANN 181 the history of a ball. Some individuals may recollect all the little events of which the great result is the battle won or lost : but no individual can recollect the order in which, or the exact moment at which, they occurred, which makes all the difference as to their value or importance. Then the faults or the misbehaviour of some gave occasion for the distinction of others, and perhaps were the cause of material losses, and you cannot write a true history of a battle without including the faults and misbehaviour of part at least of those engaged. Believe me that every man you see in a military uniform is not a hero, and that, although in the account given of a general action like Waterloo, many instances of individual heroism must be passed over unrelated, it is better for the general interests to leave those parts of the story untold, than to tell the whole truth. If, however, you should still think it right to turn your attention to this subject, I am most ready to give you every assistance and information in my power.

“ Believe me, etc ,  
“ WELLINGTON ”

“ Paris, 17th August, 1815

• •  
“ MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 11th, and I regret much that I have not been able to prevail upon you to relinquish your plan. You may depend upon it you will never make it a satisfactory work. I will get you the list of the French army, generals, etc. Just to show you how little reliance can be placed, even on what are supposed the best accounts of a battle, I mention that there are some circumstances mentioned in General ——’s account which did not occur as he relates them. He was not on the field during the whole battle, particularly not during the latter part of it. The battle began, I believe, at eleven. It is impossible to say when each important occurrence took place, nor in what order. These are answers to all your queries but remember, I recommend you to leave the battle of Waterloo as it is ”

•  
With these warnings, and many similar ones from the same source, ringing in his ears, how shall a writer, at this time of

worn theme, or hope to succeed where  
ave failed before him? Nothing more  
tempted than a synthetic sketch of the  
those official reports which the Duke  
d as the only authentic materials for  
by his own subsequent memoranda  
incidents drawn from the numerous per  
s already in print, others still in faded,  
and by the labours of those who have  
ted the official papers on both sides.  
to descend in torrents during the night  
h violent thunder and lightning, drench-  
th armies in their comfortless bivouac

The rain continued  
of the 17th-18th, with the daybreak," wrote an officer of the Scots  
ing the troops of blood, "a set of creatures we all were, covered  
on the miry fields to foot, our white belts dyed with the red

"We arose with the dawn, about to begin."

"We arose with the dawn," wrote an officer of the Scots  
Greys, "a miserably soon after sunrise on Sunday 18th June  
with mud from head to foot, our white belts dyed with the red  
from our jackets as if we had already completed the sanguinary  
work which we were about to begin."

The rain stopped soon after sunrise on Sunday 18th June  
though the sky remained overcast. In the allied lines all  
was busy preparing for the day, the soldiers kindled  
fires with difficulty, and soon after the batteries, squadrons,  
arms, and a practice, their appointed places in line of battle.  
never succeeded in as next in seniority to the Commander in  
of their muskets, the Duke and said that he should like to  
"fall in" sounded because if anything should happen to the  
and battalions too, and would devolve on himself

Lord Uxbridge, who was on bad personal terms with Lord  
chief came to the Duke and said that he should like to  
know his plans, but had been forced upon him

Guards instead of his old cavalry general, Lord Combermere ANN 1815  
(Stapleton-Cotton), and his answer was a rough one.

"Plans!" quoth he "I have no plans, except to give that fellow a damned good licking"

Waterloo, where Wellington's headquarters were on the night of 17th-18th June, is a small village, at that time within the great forest of Soignes,\* on the Charleroi-to-Brussels paved road, about nine miles south of Brussels. Two English miles further south is the hamlet of Mont-Saint-Jean, where the *chaussée* to Nivelles branches off to the south-west. From this point the Charleroi road, still running south, ascends a gentle incline, till, nearly three-quarters of a mile south of Mont-Saint-Jean, it is traversed at right angles by the unpaved cross-road from Wavre and Ohain to Braine-la-Leud, marking the crest of a low ridge running due east and west. From this point the road dips into a shallow valley, passing between a sandpit on the left,† and the farmhouse and orchard of La Haye Sainte on the right, crossing the hollow, and ascending through a slight cutting a second ridge, parallel to that of Mont-Saint-Jean, and distant from it at no point more than twelve hundred yards. The cross-road from Ohain to Braine-la-Leud marked the front of Wellington's position, and, although an insignificant feature in unprofessional eyes, possessed at that time certain qualities which proved of inestimable importance to the defending force. To the east of the Charleroi *chaussée* this cross-road was fenced with high and thick hedges now removed, to the west it sank into a cutting between banks five or six feet high ‡

To appreciate the merit of the Duke's position it must be borne in mind that the cross-road from Ohain to Braine-la-Leud runs along the edge of the plateau, that the ground

\* In 1815 the forest extended further to the south than it does now, and encircled the village, which, at the present day, lies on its outskirts

† Now partially filled up

‡ Most unhappily these banks have been obliterated by the removal of soil to form the huge mound marking the right centre of the allied position

Æt 46. behind, that is, to the north, declines gently for a thousand yards as far as the hamlet of Mont-Saint-Jean, and that the ground in front, to the south, falls with a sharper descent into the little valley. It was the Duke's invariable custom, when possible, to keep his first line in shelter from fire, until immediately before it was engaged,\* and the ground at Mont Saint-Jean enabled him to carry out this principle. The first line of the Allies was placed on the reverse slope of the ridge behind the hedges and banks of the Ohain cross-road, the infantry being in quarter columns at deploying interval. The undulating ground behind them was occupied by the second line and reserves, including nearly all the cavalry concealed from view of the enemy and protected from his fire, by the land contour. The front was not protected by entrenchments, but the banks and hedges were pierced for the passage of cavalry and artillery.

The allied  
order of  
battle.

Commencing from the centre of the allied position, to the east of the Charleroi road, Sir Thomas Picton held command with his 5th Division, Kempt's Light Infantry standing nearest the road next them Pack's Highland Brigade, with Best's Hanoverian Brigade on their left. Wincke's Hanoverian Brigade further to the left with Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar's Nassau Brigade on their left opposite the farm of Papelotte, and Vandeleur's and Vivian's cavalry brigades covering the outer or left flank of the whole line. To the west of the Charleroi road, its left flank resting upon it, was formed Alten's 3rd Division, the brigades in succession from the left being Ompteda's King's German Legion, Kielmansegge's Hanoverians and Colin Halket's 5th Brigade. On Alten's right was drawn up the 1st or Guards Division under General Cooke, comprising the brigades of Maitland and Byng, with Byng's right resting on the Nivellet high road. Beyond this road, and in reserve about Merbe-Braine, Clifton's 2nd Division, composed of the brigades of

His chief criticism of Blücher's disposition before the battle of Ligny was that the troops would suffer from the enemy's fire before they could

Mitchell, Du Plat, and W Halket On the extreme right, Ann 1815.  
 and thrown back from the general alignment, Chassé's Dutch  
 division occupied the village and vicinity of Braine-la-Leud  
 Lord Edward Somerset's brigade of heavy cavalry was behind  
 the centre of the line to the west of the Charleroi road, to the  
 east of which was Sir William Ponsonby's "Union Brigade"—  
 the Royal Dragoons, Scots Greys, and Inniskillens. Kruse's  
 Dutch infantry was posted on Somerset's right

It will be observed that, although the army had been  
 formally organised in two corps, the left being under com-  
 mand of the Prince of Orange, the right under Lord Hill, this  
 novel arrangement was not strictly adhered to in the line of  
 battle, the brigades being disposed so as to distribute as much  
 as possible the older and more trustworthy troops among those  
 of less experience The Duke was careful to give his first  
 line the advantage of the shelter afforded by the ground, and  
 this was skilfully done But to this there was one exception,  
 utterly unaccounted for to this day. Bylandt's Dutch brigade  
 was placed immediately on the east of the Charleroi road, on  
 the outer slope of the ridge, a hundred and fifty yards in front  
 of Kempt and Pack, and wholly exposed to the enemy's fire  
 What these poor fellows suffered there must be remembered  
 when their subsequent behaviour has to be described

Such being the general disposition of the first line of the  
 Allies, there remain to be described certain advanced posts The advanced posts  
 of great importance which the Duke caused to be occupied  
 Abutting on the west side of the Charleroi road, three  
 hundred yards in front of the general line, is the farmhouse,  
 outbuildings, garden, and orchard of La Haye Sainte, enclosed  
 in walls and hedges \* This was occupied as an advanced post  
 by four hundred men of the King's German Legion, and an  
*abattis* was thrown across the high-road from the southern

\* The house and barn have been rebuilt since 1815, but much of the original  
 garden wall remains, in which, on the west side, may be traced the loopholes  
 made by its garrison Even the two slight buttresses shown in the con-  
 temporary drawing remain to this day

Æt 48. angle of the enclosure. Four hundred yards in front of the extreme allied left, Perponcher's Dutchmen occupied the farms of La Haye and Papelotte, with a picket of the 10th Hussars thrown still further forward in the village of Smoham.

Coming now to the right of the allied position, there stand in the valley five hundred yards in front of the Ohain cross road, the château, walled garden, and farmyard of Hougoumont,\* protected at that time on the south by a thick wood and copse, which has now disappeared. This quiet country house, with its rustic environment, was destined to lasting fame by reason of the long-drawn fury with which its possession was contested. It was occupied at first by the light companies of the 3rd Battalion 1st (Grenadier) Guards, of the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, and of the 2nd Battalion 3rd Guards,† a Nassau regiment, and some Hanoverian rifles. About noon, four more companies of the Coldstream, and, later still, the remainder of the 3rd Guards, were moved in to reinforce. During the night the loopholes in the garden wall were cleared out, ‡ new ones were cut in the buildings, platforms and embankments were raised inside the garden walls to enable the men to fire over the top.

The Allies, then, showed a front of nearly three English miles towards the south, defined and strengthened by the hedges and banks of the Ohain cross-road, and with four advanced posts, La Haye, Papelotte, La Haye Sainte with its sandpit, and Hougoumont with its garden, orchard, and wood. On the right the line extended a mile further but was thrown back nearly *en potence* so as to face west-south west.

Mounted on his famous charger Copenhagen, the Duke rode with his staff along the lines as the brigades took up

This is what philologists term a <sup>ghost</sup> name. The real name was Château du Goumont, but it found its way into despatches, and thence, indelibly into history as the Château d'Hougoumont.

\* Now the Scots Guards.

† Not made for the first time, as usually stated. They were part of the old defences of the place having as may be seen to this day stone facings in the

their positions Crossing over to Hougomont, he brought ANN 1815. the Coldstream Guards back from the copse, posting them in the orchard, garden, and buildings, and replaced them by sending the Hanoverian and Nassau men into the wood He wore his usual exceedingly plain dress—blue frock, blue cloak,\* white pantaloons, black sword-belt, cocked hat without plume,† but with King George's black cockade and three smaller ones in the colours of Portugal, Spain, and the Netherlands, indicating the four services in which he held marshal's rank The one piece of dandyism he affected was wearing a white cravat, fastened behind the neck with a buckle, instead of the regulation black stock.

The Emperor Napoleon, before retiring to rest at the farm of Caillou shortly before midnight on the 17th, dictated to Soult the order of battle for the morrow. After resting an hour he rose again, and, accompanied by General Bertrand, rode through the pouring rain right round his advanced posts He was uneasy lest the enemy should beat a retreat during the night, but from the little tavern of La Belle Alliance,‡ distant only 1,400 yards from the centre of the allied line along the Charleroi road, he saw the bivouac fires of Wellington's army, and felt satisfied it was going to hold its ground Returning to the Caillou at dawn, he found a despatch, sent off by Grouchy from Gembloux at ten o'clock, announcing that the Prussians were moving in two columns, one upon Liège, the other upon Wavre, and that he intended to follow the Wavre column, to prevent it co-operating

Position of  
the French  
army

\* When Garrard was making an equestrian statuette of the Duke, Lord Bathurst asked the Duke whether he wore a cloak at Waterloo "It was a showery day," replied he, "though it got finer in the afternoon I had my cloak on and off fifty times I remember very well putting it on, because I never get wet when I can help it. When it grew fine, I took it off and fastened it on my saddle" (*Salisbury MSS*, 1837)

† The Duke's cocked hat was made exceedingly low in the crown, and was commonly covered with oilskin in bad weather

‡ This name, which derived so much significance from the events of the day, had its *devisive* origin in the marriage of a former proprietor, who was old and ugly, with a pretty young woman in the neighbourhood



with Wellington. All this was satisfactory enough. Half  
 Blücher's forces were falling back upon their communications  
 with Luxembourg, with the other half Grouchy assuredly  
 could deal, and prevent any interference with the defeat  
 Napoleon was about to inflict on the Anglo-Dutch army.  
 He little knew that Wellington and Blücher had been in  
 communication throughout the night. The state of the  
 ground, however in consequence of the rain, had seriously  
 retarded the march of the Emperor's divisions. It had been  
 his intention to attack at daybreak, but now at 5 a.m., he  
 issued orders for the men to make their soup, and for the  
 brigades to take up their positions in line of battle at nine  
 o'clock, "as indicated in his order of the previous evening".  
 It was long after that hour before his array was complete.  
 The whole of the Imperial Guard, Lobau's corps d'armée,  
 Dürutte's division, and Kellermann's cuirassiers had not  
 arrived from Genappe. The state of the roads and country  
 greatly retarded their march, but the mischief had its source  
 in the Emperor's fatal waste of the morning of the 17th. Had  
 he advanced early on that morning on the 17th, he would not  
 only have interfered very gravely with the retreat of the Allies,  
 but, supposing them to have succeeded in retiring safely upon  
 the position of Mont-Saint-Jean, his various corps would have  
 been forward in time to begin the attack early on the 18th.

The  
 Emperor's  
 breakfast  
 party

The Emperor broke his fast at the farm of le Caillou with  
 Soult, Bassano, Drouot, and other Generals, the meal being  
 served on silver plate with the Imperial arms, after which  
 at eight o'clock, maps were brought out, and the situation was  
 eagerly but leisurely discussed.

"The enemy" observed Napoleon reverting to his favourite  
 calculation of the odds, "is one-fourth stronger in numbers  
 than we,† nevertheless the chances are ninety to ten in our  
 favour". At that moment entered Noy, who had observed  
 some movements in the allied lines which looked like

\* *Houssaye*, 279

† This, of course, was not the case; probably Napoleon reckoned on Wellington  
 having brought in Prince Ferdinand's corps from Hal.

retreat, and urged the Emperor to hasten the attack, or the enemy would escape

"You have seen wrong," replied Napoleon, "the time is past for that Wellington would suffer destruction if he attempted retreat. He has thrown the dice, and they are in our favour"

Soult deplored the absence of Grouchy. He counselled the Emperor once more, as he had done the day before, to recall at least part of the 34,000 good men detached with that Marshal.

"You think," retorted the Emperor, roughly, "because Wellington defeated you, that he must be a great General. I tell you that he is a bad General, that the English are poor troops, and that this will be the affair of a *déjeuner*."

"I hope so," replied Soult.

After this the party were joined by Napoleon's brother Jérôme and General Reille. The Emperor asked Reille his opinion of the English army. Reille certainly was not without experience of its quality: he said he thought that, well posted as they were, the British infantry were impregnable to a front attack, because of the excellence of their fire, but he believed they might be outmanœuvred. Napoleon liked this opinion no better than Soult's, with an impatient exclamation he broke up the gathering. The General of Engineers, Haxo, returned from reconnoitring and reported that the enemy had no entrenchments. He did not mention the natural features and buildings of which Wellington had taken full advantage to strengthen his position.

At this time only Reille's corps was in position; the other columns were still moving up from Genappe, labouring through the deep soil. Jérôme Buonaparte told the Emperor that on the previous evening the hotel waiter, who served him with supper at Genappe, repeated what he had heard an aide-de-camp say while Wellington was dining at the same house in the afternoon, namely, that the British and Prussian commanders had given each other the rendezvous before the

Æt 46. forest of Soignes, and that the Prussians would come up by way of Wavre.

"Bah!" said Napoleon, 'after a battle such as that of Fleurus (Ligny) the junction of the English with the Prussians is out of the question for two days from now. Besides, the Prussians have Grouchy at their heels.' Then, wearing his well known grey *paletôt* over his usual uniform as a colonel of *chasseurs-à-cheval* Napoleon got on his white charger *Maréngo*\* and rode off to the front at La Belle Alliance, which he had fixed as the *point d'appui* of the right and left wings of his army. He took with him as guide Jean Decoster who kept a small roadside tavern,† bound in the saddle of a troop-horse, and attached by a picket-rope to that of a mounted *chasseur*. Having scanned the allied position, and while his troops were still assembling, the Emperor rode back to the farm of Rosomme, where, seated at a small table in the open air, he wrote to Grouchy in reply to that Marshal's despatch of 10 p.m. on the 17th. Upon this letter of the Emperor's, and the interpretation put upon it by Grouchy hinged, as it turned out, the issue of the day. To take any part here in the controversy between the apologists of Napoleon and the defenders of Grouchy would be far outside the limits of the present work, that Napoleon's instructions to Grouchy were obscure, or at least ambiguous, is sufficiently proved by the widely divergent interpretation put upon their text by the historians who have most recently analysed it. This much, however may be said. Napoleon himself, as is well known, laid the whole blame of the subsequent miscarriage upon Grouchy but the initial error lay in the vagueness of the Emperor's orders to him when he was

The  
Emperor's  
order to  
Grouchy

\* *Maréngo* was a beautiful little Arab measuring only 14 hands 2 inches. His skeleton may be seen in the museum of the United Service Institution, but one of his hoofs, mounted in silver gilt as a snuff box, belongs to the men of St. James's Palace guard. *Maréngo* in the course of the day was wounded in the near haunch, on which Napoleon mounted his white Arab mare *Maisie*.

† In some maps Decoster's tavern situated a few hundred yards south of La Belle Alliance, is marked *Maison d'Ecosse*, a corruption of *Maison Decoster*.

first detached on the 17th at Ligny to pursue the Prussians ANY 1815.  
 "in the direction of Namur and Maestricht." But when, early on the 18th, Napoleon became aware that Blücher had baffled the French Marshal by a rapid concentration upon Wavre, so far from summoning Grouchy to the support of the main army, he directed him to follow the Prussians to Wavre. Now Grouchy, with 34,000 men, had before him 75,000 Prussians, by no means in the dispirited and disorganised condition imagined by the Emperor. This consideration is not always present with those who reproach Grouchy for not pressing the enemy more vigorously. But then it is said that when he heard from Walhain (not Sart-à-Walhain \*) the cannonade opening at Mont-Saint-Jean, he should at once have made all speed to support the Emperor, as Gérard urgently desired him to do. Supposing he had done so, which would have been directly to disregard his instructions, must he not still have been too late to save the battle, being sixteen miles distant from the field? When, at 4 p.m., he received the Emperor's morning order, it did but confirm him in what he had undertaken: "You will direct your movements upon Wavre, so as to approach us, act in concert with us and keep communication with us, driving before you the Prussian army which has taken that route, and which may have halted at Wavre, *where you must arrive as soon as possible.*" This command Grouchy carried out to the letter by attacking and defeating Thielmann's corps at Wavre, while the other three Prussian corps slowly but steadily made their way towards Mont-Saint-Jean. "One is compelled," says M. Houssaye, "to read into this letter (Napoleon's morning order) that which is not in it, namely, an order to Grouchy to manoeuvre by his left in order to bring him near the main body of the French army. . . . From the tenour of this order it is manifest that, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the Emperor neither summoned Grouchy to his field of battle, nor reckoned on seeing him arrive" †

\* \* *Ropes*, 256

† *Houssaye*, 316 note

Æt. 46.

However whether Grouchy is to be blamed for disobeying the order dictated to Bertrand by the Emperor and sent to Grouchy on 17th June (an order which he afterwards repeatedly and falsely denied having received), whether further the construction which he placed on the Emperor's order of 10 a.m. on the 18th can be justified, is outside the scope of the present narrative, all that concerns it is that although Grouchy was within hearing of the guns at Waterloo, and was strongly urged by Gérard, commanding the 4th Corps, to move to the Emperor's support, he refused to do so, and spent the day fighting the 3rd Prussian corps under Thielmann at Wavre. A later and more imperative order sent by Napoleon at 1.30 p.m., when Bulow's attack on the French right flank was imminent, did not reach Grouchy till five in the evening, when it was too late to do anything.

The  
French  
order of  
battle.

With drums beating, colours flying, and bands playing *Veillons au salut de l'Empire*, Napoleon's last army defiled past him into its position on the plateau of La Belle Alliance, affording to their adversaries beyond the valley an imposing display of force as the heavy columns wheeled and dressed with the deliberate precision of a holiday review. Each brigade as it passed by lowered its colours to the great chieftain, loud and long rang the shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* louder and longer said a veteran officer of the 1st Corps d'armée, than he had ever known before for the men were determined that they should be heard among the brick-red lines which fringed the crest of Mont-Saint-Jean.

The position taken up by Napoleon was on the ridge, or plateau of La Belle Alliance, corresponding in height, general direction, and character to that of Mont-Saint-Jean. The French centre, like that of the Allies, was marked by the Charleroi high road, like that of the Allies, also, but not so accurately the general alignment was marked by a cross road. The force on the field consisted of the 1st (d'Erlon's four divisions), 2nd (Reille's three divisions) and 6th (Lobau's

three divisions) Corps, the Imperial Guard (three divisions), ANN 1815. the heavy cavalry of Kellermann and Milhaud, and the light cavalry of Domon and Subervie—in all 71,947 men, of which 15,765 were cavalry and 7,232 artillery with 246 guns

The army was disposed in three lines, the right wing of the first line being formed by d'Erlon's corps in dense columns under Allix, Donzelot, Marcognet, and Durutte, with its inner flank resting on the Charleroi road near La Belle Alliance, and with Jacquinet's light cavalry covering the outer flank opposite La Haye and Papelotte. Reille's corps of three divisions—Bachelu, Foy, and Jérôme—furnished the left wing of the first line, extending from La Belle Alliance to the Nivelles road, on which were Piré's light cavalry, opposite Hougomont. After these troops had taken up their position, vigilant eyes in the allied army could perceive countless black specks appearing in the intervals along the front—those terrible *bouches-à-feu* which herald and enforce the operations of the sister arms\*. In the centre of the second line, Count Lobau's infantry were massed in column on the west of the Charleroi road, balanced by the cavalry of Domon and Subervie on the east thereof. D'Erlon's infantry divisions had the support of Count Milhaud's cuirassiers in the second line, those of Reille that of Kellermann's. Further back, close to Rossomme, loomed the dark masses of the Imperial Guard in reserve, with cavalry on either flank †

\* It is needless to remind the reader that no display of this kind could ever be witnessed in modern warfare. It was sufficiently remarkable even in those days, for the English and French artillery were within easy range of each other the whole time.

† The infantry of the Guard wore their fighting dress this day—bear-skin cap without plume or hackle, blue breeches and long blue coats with red epaulettes. But each man carried in his haversack his parade dress, to be worn on entering Brussels, making his load, with musket and forty rounds of ammunition, nearly 70 lbs avoirdupois. The Young Guard consisted of men of four years', the Middle Guard of men of eight years', and the Old Guard of men of twelve years' service and upwards.

Æt 48. Seldom, if ever within historic times has such a mighty force been marshalled within so small a compass. Seventy two thousand French, with 246 guns, were drawn up against sixty-eight thousand British and their allies, with 156 guns—one hundred and forty thousand men with four hundred cannon, yet the whole space, from flank to flank, was less than three miles,\* at no point did the distance between the opposing armies amount to a mile, three miles, measured along the straight Charleroi road, covered the distance between the rearmost reserves of both armies. The undulating ground between the two positions was deeply cultivated, without fences, as at this day and covered with high and rich crops of rye and clover soon to be trampled into a miry and bloody stubble. To one standing midway across the hollow between the two hosts, before they engaged, the preponderance of force would have seemed enormously in favour of the French, both because of their massive formation—quarter columns of double companies at short intervals—and because the first line of the Allies were screened by the hedges, and their second line, reserves, and most of the cavalry hidden by the reverse slope of the ridge.

It was close on eleven o'clock before the Emperor had completed his leisurely dispositions and returned to his post at Rosomme. There he issued the order which showed his disdain for Reille's caution. As soon as all the troops had come up from Genappe, which would be at one o'clock, the allied position was to be attacked in the centre, the British infantry whom Napoleon never yet had encountered in battle, were to be crushed and pierced by the very means which those who had so encountered them knew they were strongest in resisting and the superior manœuvring of the French, although repeatedly proved in former campaigns, was not to be employed in turning the enemy's left where he was weakest whereby also he should be separated from the possible approach of the Prussians from Wavre.

Wellington held a front of nearly eight miles at Busaco with 1













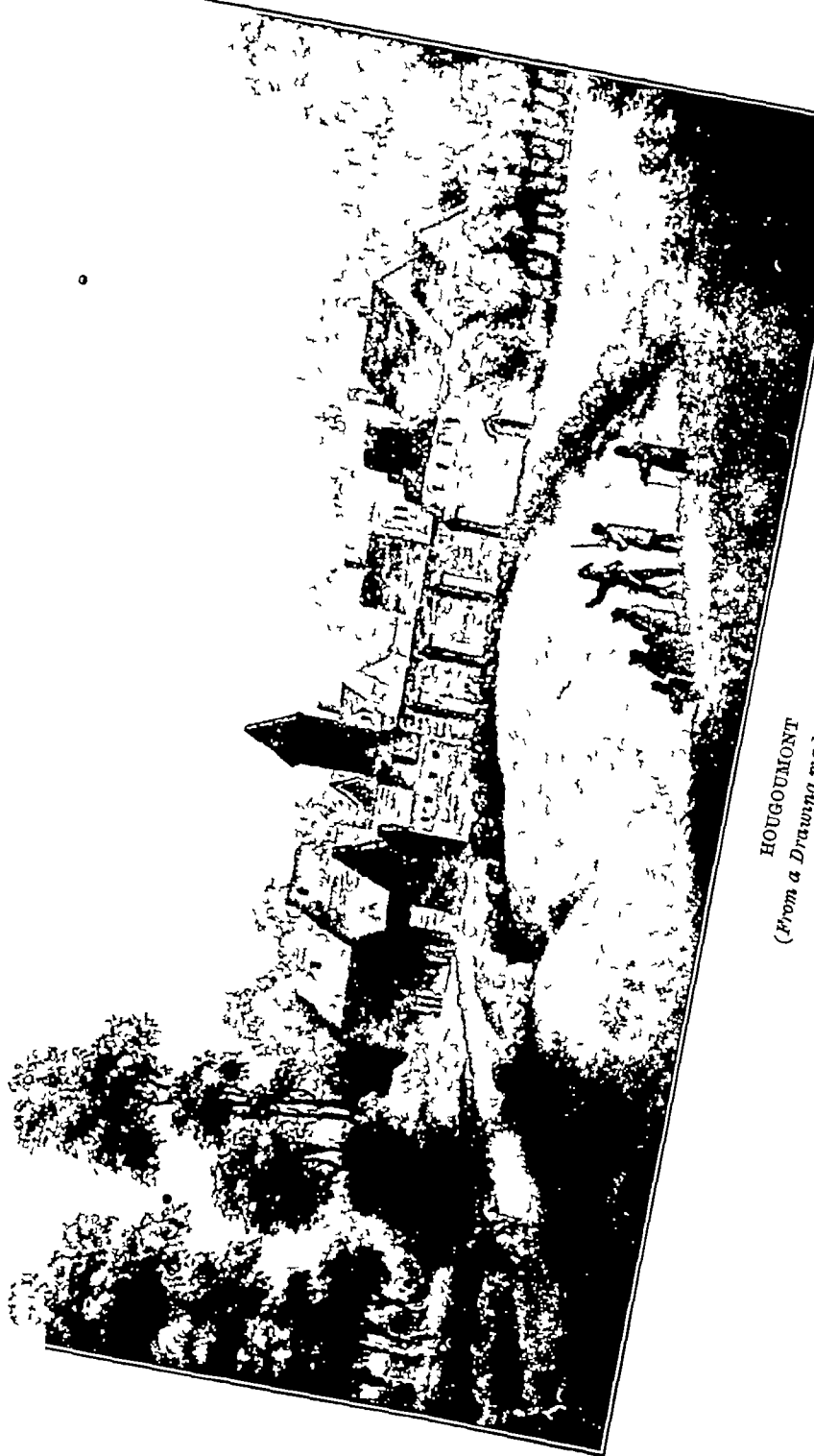
Æt 46.  
 ———  
 Appearance of  
 Bülow's  
 Prussian  
 corps.

were placed in battery in front of La Belle Alliance, and Ney's columns stood waiting the word to advance. The usual preliminary cannonade was about to open when, at one o'clock or thereby Napoleon, ever anxiously looking for signs of Grouchy's approach, although he had no right to expect it, detected, about six miles to the north-east, a dark shadow on the heights—apparently a body of troops. The atmosphere was close and hazy, Soult was sure it was troops probably Grouchy's, others of the staff thought it was only a wood. All doubts were set at rest by Marbot's hussars bringing in a Prussian sergeant whom they had captured, bearing a letter from Bülow to Wellington, announcing the arrival of the 4th Prussian Corps at Ohapelle-Saint Lambert. The junction, then, of the Prussians with Wellington's army which Napoleon had derided in the morning as *paroles en l'air* was on the point of accomplishment.\* Instantly he detached the light cavalry of Dornu and Subervie to reconnoitre, and Soult wrote at the same time to Grouchy bidding him abandon his movement on Wavre, hasten to fall on Bülow's rear and join the French right. 'Ne perdez pas un instant pour vous rapprocher de nous et nous joindre, et pour écraser Bulow que vous prendrez en flagrant délit.'†

The apparition of the Prussian corps gave Napoleon more concern than surprise, because he had already received a despatch sent by Grouchy from Gembloux at six in the morning announcing the general movement of the Prussian army either upon Brussels or to form a junction with Wellington at Mont-Saint-Jean. The Emperor however still cherished the hope that Blücher would not risk a movement upon Mont-Saint-Jean. "This morning," he said to Soult, the chances were ninety to ten in our favour, they are

\* Bülow's cavalry had been seen from the allied lines at an early hour in the morning, moving on the heights in front of Ohain. This was his advanced guard, the march of the main column being retarded by the wet ground and difficult defiles of Wavre.

† This despatch did not reach Grouchy till 5 p.m.



HOUGOUMONT  
(From a Drawing made in 1815)



The following are  
 a list of the  
 names of the  
 men who were  
 left to guard  
 the camp at  
 the time of  
 the departure  
 of the main  
 body of the  
 army.

Let your people  
 encamp near the  
 garden where the  
 soldiers were  
 killed.





still sixty to forty, and if Grouchy repairs the horrible fault ANN 1815. he has committed by loitering at Gembloux, and marches fast, the victory will be all the more decisive, because Bulow's corps will be utterly destroyed "

Among the innumerable treasures of Apsley House none are more precious than three folded pieces of ass's skin, such as the Duke used to carry in his pocket during an action, and pencil his orders upon to his Generals. By great good luck these, which were used at Waterloo, were not sponged clean as was usually done, and at this day one may retrace the firm, clear characters as they were written in the very roar and tumult of the field. The first of them must have been sent out, probably to Sir Hussey Vivian, at this period of the battle.

"The Prussians have a corps at St Lambert. Be so kind as to send a Patrole from our left by Ohain to communicate with them. Have you sent a Patrole to Braine-le-chateau?"

Napoleon could no longer neglect his right flank. incessantly taking pinches of snuff, as was his custom in times of anxiety or excitement, and as he continued to do throughout this day, the Emperor wheeled up to the right the 6th Corps under Count Lobau to guard the approaches from Wavre and Saint-Lambert. Then he gave Ney the order to begin his attack. The grand battery of eighty guns, Ney receives the order to attack posted on the edge of the plateau to the east of the Charleroi road, crashed continuously for half an hour in a cannonade to which the British and Brunswick batteries \* made prompt response. At two o'clock the fire ceased, as d'Erlon's four magnificent divisions of infantry, under the Generals Advance of d'Erlon's corps Allix, Donzelot, Marcognet, and Dyrutte, advanced 18,000 strong in echelon of divisions from the left at four hundred paces distance, Ney himself riding with d'Erlon at the head of the leading division (Allix). Napoleon rarely interfered with

\* In 1815 batteries of field and garrison artillery were termed "brigades," and batteries of horse artillery "troops."

his Generals in their mode of executing movements which he directed, on this occasion the usual formation for attack, in columns of battalions at open or half distance, was exchanged for a most objectionable one. Each division was formed in a single close column of battalions, with a front of 160 to 200 files and a depth of twenty four a formation rigid and unwieldy whence it was equally difficult to deploy or to form square, and peculiarly ill-adapted for the deep and broken ground to be traversed.\*

As each echelon in descending the slope cleared the line of fire, the batteries behind reopened on Picton's 5th Division and Bylandt's unfortunate Dutch brigade. The French covered their advance with a long line of skirmishers, and soon the whole valley from Papelotte to the Charleroi road was wrapped in flame and smoke, and filled with dreadful noise—the musketry rattling below the cannon bellowing overhead. Wellington watched the advance from under a moderate-sized elm on the ridge, just in front of where the Ohain road crosses the highway† In vain his staff urged him to move away seeing how dangerously the tree was drawing the enemy's fire. Of Allix's division, Quiot's brigade was engaged in a determined assault upon La Haye Sainte, two hundred yards in front of the Duke. Witnessing how hard pressed were Baring's Germans in defending it, he sent one of Ompteda's battalions to their relief, which, however was broken by a charge of Travers's cuirassiers, and he only withdrew when the enemy's *trailleurs* began firing from the north end of the garden‡ D'Erlon's massive columns

Attack on  
La Haye  
Sainte.

\* M. Housaye (p. 333, note) suggests that d'Erlon's *aide-de-camp*, in carrying his order to the divisional generals, mistook the formation of *les colonnes par division*, i.e. column of double companies at half or wheeling distance, for *les colonnes de division*, i.e. eight battalions in a single close column. But d'Erlon must be held responsible, as the formation took place under his eye.

† This elm is no longer to be seen, an enterprising Englishman having been allowed to purchase it and enrich himself by the sale of its wood in snuff-boxes and what not.

‡ *Waterloo Letters*, p. 33.



MAJOR GENERAL SIR DENIS PACK, KCB

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suffered terribly from artillery fire during their advance; ANN 1815 nevertheless they pressed on, steadily ascending the slope. Allix's division drove two companies of the 95th Rifles out of the sandpit near La Haye Sainte. Next them Donzelot's men, with loud cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* moved upon Bylandt's Dutchmen, who had been grievously torn by the fire of the grand battery immediately opposite them at a range of not more than a thousand yards. These broke and ran up the slope, nor can they be justly blamed for doing so, seeing how cruelly they had been exposed. The fugitives passed through the ranks of the Cameron Highlanders, who, lying in shelter of the cross-road behind the advanced position, jeered them derisively, and many a sly prod from a bayonet quickened the movement of the broken battalions to the rear.

The French *trailleurs* were now close to the hedges of the Ohain road, not a musket-shot betrayed what lay before them. Brave old Picton was there, with as much as Quatre-Bras had left him of Kempt's and Pack's brigades—three thousand light infantry and Highlanders. "Rise up!" he cried; the word was echoed by the brigade commanders, and Kempt's brigade\* moved forward to the crest, sweeping before them the busy *trailleurs*.

The congestion of the French columns had become unbearable. Donzelot halted his division, the second from the left, under the crest in order to attempt a deployment, he was in the act of carrying out this movement, so difficult from his peculiar formation, when a loud hurrah from the ridge above caused all to look up. Within forty yards stood the thin red line, far overlapping the flanks of the French column. A sharp command, and every musket was levelled at the "present," another, and a torrent of lead tore through the crowded ranks. Donzelot's men wavered, began to fall back, then, in the comparative silence, for the French cannon

Donzelot repulsed by Kempt's brigade.

\* The 28th and 32nd Regiments, the 79th Cameron Highlanders, and 1st Battalion 95th Rifles

ÆT 46. had suspended their fire as their own men climbed the slopes, was heard Picton's last word of command—"Charge, hurrah!" He lived not to see the result—a musket ball entered his right temple, and he fell dead on the spot between the cross-roads and the sandpit.\* The command was obeyed, though, with loud cheers the British line poured down the slope forcing Donzelot's disordered mass into greater confusion.

Lord Palmerston has recorded Wellington's own words describing an incident at this period of the combat—they are instructive as showing, not only how he was exposed to fire as constantly as any of his fighting line—more so because at no period of the day could he seek shelter by lying down—but also how the commander of a great army when regimental officers are falling fast, must at times assume the direction of a mere handful of men.

"A column of French was firing across the road at one of our regiments. Our people could not get at them to charge them, because they would have been disordered by crossing the road. It was a nervous moment. One of the two forces must go about in a few minutes—it was impossible to say which it might be. I saw about two hundred men of the 79th, who seemed to have had more than they liked of it. I formed them myself about twenty yards from the flank of the French column, and ordered them to fire, and in a few minutes, the French column turned about."†

Marcognet  
repulsed  
by Pack's  
brigade.

This disposed of the second echelon of Ney's attack. While Donzelot was attempting to deploy the third echelon, under Marcognet, came up on his right and passed him, crossed the Ohain road on the crest, and suddenly encountered

"A rough, foul-mouthed devil as ever lived," was the Duke's eulogy on this gallant officer, "but he always behaved extremely well; no man could do better in different services I assigned to him" (*Sloughs*, 69). The officers of the 1st Battalion Connacht Rangers, the old 88th, still wear a black line in their gold lace, in mourning for the chief who led their corps so often to victory.

† *Palmerston's Journal*, p. 53.



LIEUT-GENERAL THE EARL OF UXBRIDGE, G C B ,  
AFTERWARDS 1<sup>ST</sup> MARQUIS OF ANGLESEY

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Pack's Highland brigade deployed in line.\* Here, again, the superiority of fire from an extended front told with fatal effect on the French columns, Marcognet's men were checked. Now was the moment for the cavalry, and they were ready at hand. Sir William Ponsonby had wheeled his "Union Brigade" into line on the reverse slope to the east of the high-road—the Royal Dragoons, Scots Greys, and Inniskillens. The enemy's cavalry was threatening, and as Ponsonby's line advanced the Highlanders were forming squares, but with loud cries of "Scotland yet!" many of them seized the stirrups of the Greys as they passed through the interval, and were carried forward in the charge. The heavy cavalry fell upon both flanks of Marcognet's division, completing their rout, forced back some heavy masses of French cavalry, and rode on through the deep ground, often up to their girths, against the French in position on the south side. They got out of hand, as Wellington often complained his cavalry did, and suffered in consequence from the enemy's batteries and cavalry, finally being forced to retire with the irreparable loss of their commander, Sir William Ponsonby.†

While the Union Brigade were thus occupied on the east of the Charleroi road, Lord Uxbridge himself was leading Lord Edward Somerset's heavy brigade‡ against Travers's cuirassiers and Allix's infantry upon and to the west of that road. The cuirassiers had ridden up as far as the cross-road, and were actually in it, in the hollow way, when the Household Cavalry appeared on the bank above their heads. In order to extricate themselves, the cuirassiers had to defile to the right, and get upon the high-road between the allied position

\* Third Battalion 1st Royal Scots, 3rd Battalion 42nd Royal Highlanders, 2nd Battalion 44th Regiment, and 92nd Gordon Highlanders.

† Ponsonby's groom or orderly had not brought his charger in time to the right place, and Sir William was mounted on a hee. In leading a charge against the Polish Lancers, the animal, overweighted, stuck fast in the mire. Sir William and his aide de camp were killed on the spot.

‡ The 1st and 2nd Life Guards, the Horse Guards, and the King's Dragoon Guards. Lord Uxbridge afterwards admitted that he made a great mistake in leading this charge himself.

Æt 46. skirmishers to the attack. The skirmishers pushed forward to the very crest of the allied position, but recoiled once more from the fatal hedgerows. The storm of La Haye Sainte failed also so busily Baring's Germans spread death around them. Here again, as at Hougoumont, it is past comprehension why more use was not made of artillery which, in ten minutes, should have reduced the homestead to a heap of road metal. Ney flew about like a madman. The cannonade at this period was terrific the oldest soldiers had not heard the like. To save them from the fire, Wellington withdrew some of his battalions behind the dip of the plateau. Ney mistook it for a movement of retreat, and called for a brigade of cavalry. D'Erlon's infantry was already ascending the slopes. By some misadventure, instead of a single brigade, two whole divisions, 4,000 strong, including the light cavalry of the Guard and the Red Lancers were set in motion to the front. Great was the surprise of Wellington's staff to see this preparation to attack infantry still in perfect order in their position. So far from any intention to retreat, Wellington had just been strengthening his first line by bringing up brigades from the second line and reserve, every regiment lying down to avoid exposure to fire.

The men were called to their feet, squares were formed, the gunners were ordered to keep up their fire till the last moment, and then to run for shelter in the squares, leaving their guns at the edge of the plateau. The French cavalry

The behaviour of the artillery at this period was not perfect; indeed this is one of the episodes of the battle which lay at the root of the Duke's firm determination never to countenance any history of it. Writing to Lord Milgrave, 15th December, 1816, in respect to a request which had been made for a mark of special favour to the field officers of artillery present at Waterloo, he said: In my opinion, you have done quite right to refuse to grant this favour. To tell you the truth, I was not very well pleased with the artillery in the battle of Waterloo. The army was formed in squares immediately on the slope of the rising ground, on the summit of which the artillery was placed, with orders not to engage with artillery but to fire only when bodies of troops came under their fire. It was very difficult to get them to obey this order. The French cavalry charged, and were formed on the same ground with our artillery in general.

I see the fire has  
commenced from the  
bay side to the top  
of the Chateau

You must however still  
keep your Men in those  
parts to which the fire  
does not reach  
Take care that no Men  
are lost by the falling

---

of the Roof or of the  
after they will have fallen  
in among the trees and  
inside of the garden, parts  
of which of it should be  
possible for the Cavalry  
to pass through the  
timber on the border  
of the house -



We ought to have  
more of the Cavalry  
between the two  
high Roads that is  
to say, three Brigades  
at least besides the  
Brigade in observation  
on the right & be-  
hind the main Cavalry

& the 8 of Amherst's  
Buffs

One heavy & one light  
Brigade might remain  
on the left

DER PENCILLED AND SENT BY THE DUK OF WILLINGTON, DURING THE  
BATTLE OF WATERLOO, TO THE EARL OF UXBRIDGE, COMMANDING THE  
CAVALRY

[Vol 11 F 3]



advanced on the west of the high-road in echelon of squad- ANN 1815  
rons from the right, slowly, because of the deep ground and the high corn. It was a madcap—a cruel enterprise. The batteries on the heights drove lanes of death through the glittering masses of cuirassiers, of gay lancers and gallant hussars, with faultless, yet fruitless, courage and discipline these fine horsemen rode up to the batteries and through them out on the plateau behind, where, far as the eye could reach, the squares stood motionless, impregnably hedged with steel. It is an hour for ever memorable in the annals of the British infantry, perhaps the best, because the simplest, account of it is contained in Wellington's own words to Walter Scott, who was importunate for materials of history.

“The French cavalry were on the plateau in the centre between the two high-roads for nearly three quarters of an hour, riding about among our squares of infantry, all firing (of artillery) having ceased on both sides. I moved our squares forward to the guns, and our cavalry, which had been detached by Lord Uxbridge to the flanks, was brought back to the centre \* The French cavalry were then driven off. After that circumstance, repeated attacks were made along the whole front of the centre

within a few yards of our guns. We could not expect the artillery men to remain at their guns in such a case. But I had a right to expect that the officers and men of the artillery would do as I did, and as all the Staff did, that is to take shelter in the squares of the infantry till the French cavalry should be driven off the ground, either by our cavalry or infantry. But they did no such thing, they ran off the field entirely, taking with them ladders, ammunition, and everything, and when, in a few minutes, we had driven off the French cavalry, and could have made good use of our artillery, we had no artillerymen to fire them, and, in point of fact, I should have had no artillery during the whole of the latter part of the action, if I had not kept a reserve at the commencement. It is on account of these little stories, which must come out, that I object to all the propositions to write what is called a history of the battle of Waterloo” (*Suppl Despatches*, xiv 618)

\* The actual order of recall is here given in facsimile. “We ought to have more of the Cavalry between the two high Roads. That is to say, three Brigades at least, besides the Brigade in observation on the right, & besides the Belgian Cavalry & the D of Cumberland's Hussars. One heavy & one light Brigade might remain on the left.”



Æt 46 of the position by cavalry and infantry till seven at night, how many I cannot tell." \*

The French cavalry renew their attack.

The French cavalry with indomitable courage and perseverance, renewed their assault on the plateau a second, a third, and even a fourth time, with exactly similar result. The Emperor realised the terrible blunder that had taken place, he saw from La Belle Alliance what was going on beyond the valley "That premature movement" he said to Soult, "may have a fatal effect on the fortunes of to-day"

He has compromised us growled Soult, "as he did at Jena."

"It is too early by an hour continued Napoleon "but we must support him now he has done it."

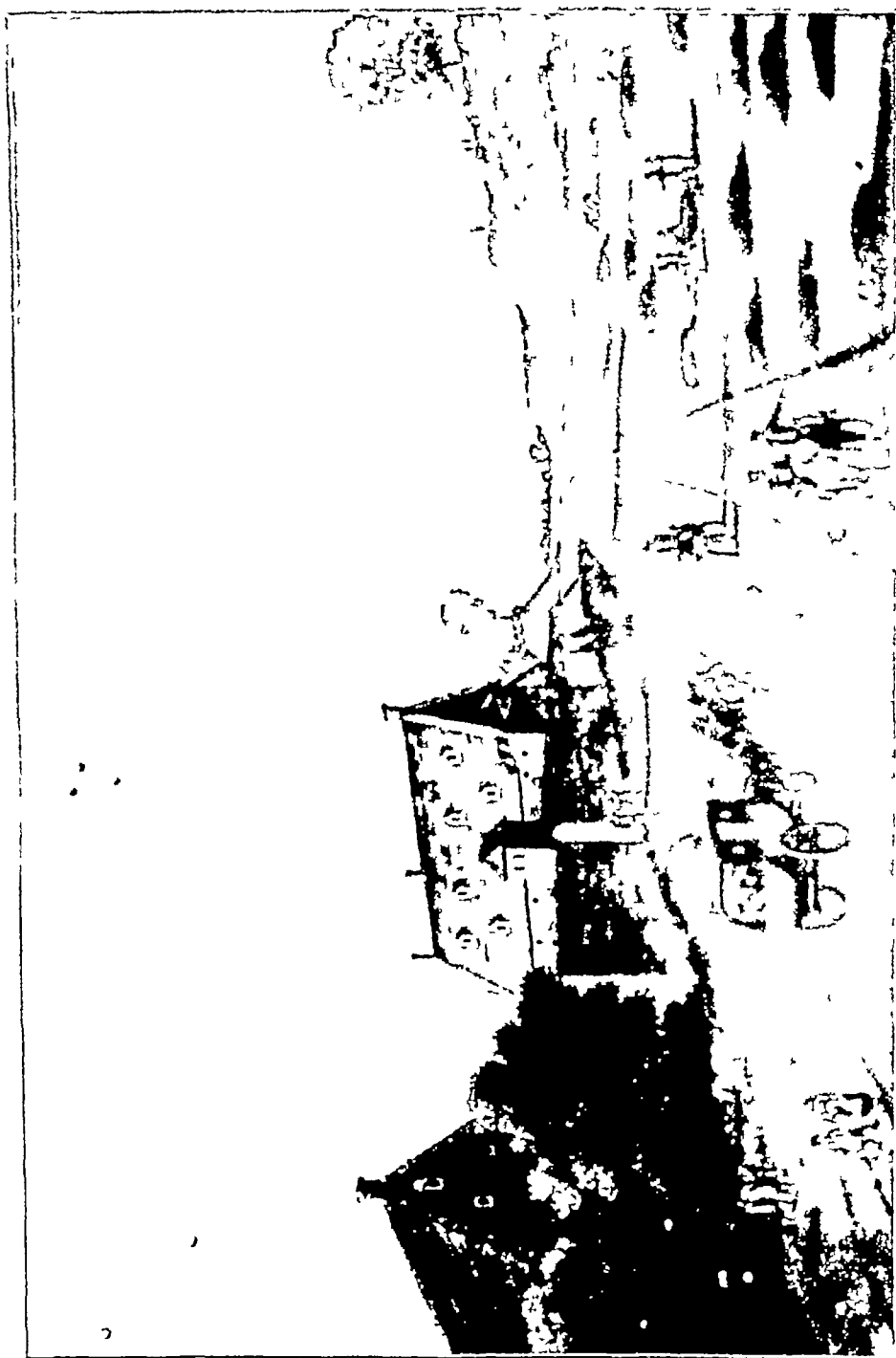
He ordered Kellermann to support Milhaud with four brigades of cuirassiers and carabineers. They gained the crest they crowned the allied position, yet they could do no good when there, because they were not supported by infantry. Had the Emperor withdrawn one of Reille's divisions from the fruitless operations at Hougoumont, it must have gone hardly with the Allies, for it only wanted the fire of artillery and infantry to break the squares—the cavalry would have done the rest † But Napoleon had his whole attention engrossed elsewhere at the time he was obliged to leave Ney to deal with the enemy in front, in order that he himself might prepare to encounter danger from another quarter. Meanwhile the garrison of La Haye Sainte had exhausted all their ammunition. The precaution of making a postern in the western or northern wall of the enclosure had been neglected, ‡ it was found impossible to pass in supplies and Baring, having spent his last cartridge,

Capture of La Haye Sainte.

*Despatches, xii. 610*

† It is only some fifty miles from Waterloo to Courtrai, where, in 1802, the Flemish pikemen first showed how infantry alone were the masters of cavalry alone, and, in the Battle of the Spurs, defeated Robert, Count d'Artois and all the chivalry of France.

‡ *Stonhewer* 215.



TA HAVE SAINT FROM THE SOUTH  
(from a book in the 12th 14th)



collected the remains of his little force, forty-two men all told, and made good his escape to the general line. A serious loss, this, to the Allies. French sharpshooters swarmed into every part of the buildings and enclosure, whence they directed an injurious fire upon the right of the 5th Division. Ney established a battery there, which enfiladed the allied squares at less than three hundred yards range; Donzelot's skirmishers, crossing to the west of the high-road, pressed yet closer, some battalions of D'Erlon's wearied divisions moved forward once more, one of Reille's fresh columns might have decided the contest, but Reille was still wasting his energy on Hougoumont. Nevertheless, the danger was tremendous. General Ompteda fell dead near the high-road, Sir William de Lancey, the Quartermaster-General, riding beside Wellington, received mortal injury from a cannon shot; not far off, Sir Alexander Gordon took his death-wound; further to the right the Prince of Orange and General Alten were struck down; Kielmansegge's Germans, sorely pressed, began to yield. *The centre is open. vive l'Empereur!* It is a moment to test the steadiest nerve. The Duke remained calm, but very grave, beset on all sides by officers asking for instructions, he has but one answer for all. "There are no orders, except to stand firm to the last man."

Ney only required reinforcements to establish himself in the enemy's centre. He sent Colonel Heymès to ask them from the Emperor. "More troops!" shouted Napoleon; "where am I to get them? Does he expect me to make them?"

In truth Napoleon's position was as critical as Wellington's. It was about half-past four when he became aware that his right flank was imminently threatened. Blucher had joined Bulow's 4th Corps at Chapelle-Saint-Lambert about one o'clock, whence he directed his march upon Plancenoit, a village well in rear of the French right. When he began his attack here about five o'clock, the 2nd Corps under Pirch I

The Prussian army enters the field

At 16. of the 2nd Grenadiers and the 1st of the 2nd Chasseurs) who once more retook Plancenoit, the Young Guard rallying under their shelter

Napoleon  
orders the  
final  
attack.

Then, and not before, Napoleon was free to turn his mind to the attack on Mont-Saint-Jean. It was past seven, he had lost the support of Loban's corps, which must remain on the defensive, yet, as he scanned the opposing ridge through his glass, fortune seemed to smile on the tricolor. On his right, Durrut's division held La Haye and Papelotte, with skirmishers extended to the very crest of the plateau, d'Erlon's other divisions were busy and well forward on Durrut's left. In the centre, the gunners and sharpshooters at La Haye Sainte were diligently raking the allied position on their right and left to the west of the road. Ney crowned the height, Wellington's front was broken and disordered—probably he had used up all his reserves, there was yet time to snatch victory by a supreme effort. The Emperor had still in hand twelve battalions of the Guard, two others being engaged in holding Plancenoit. Leaving three more as a reserve near La Belle Alliance he caused Drouot to advance into the valley with the other nine formed in squares, riding himself at the head of the leading battalion.

Advance  
of the  
Imperial  
Guard.

Again too late! Half an hour earlier when Ney implored reinforcements, this noble column might have turned the day but the moment *d frapper juste* was past. Wellington had re-established his line, bringing Chassé's Dutch division in from Braine-la Leud, Vandeleur's dragoons and Vivian's hussars from the extreme left, and calling up Wincke's infantry brigade and four Brunswick battalions from the reserve. Moreover the 1st Prussian Corps had reached Ohain an hour previously. Wellington had sent Colonel Fremantle to bid them hasten to his support but their commander hesitated, for some of his staff had brought him word that the English were beaten, and that the road to Brussels was one mass of fugitives. Happily Muffling had ridden towards the left to look out for his countrymen. Perceiving that Zieten

Zieten's  
Prussian  
corps  
enters the  
field.

WATERLOO, JUNE 18, 1815  
(From a Lithograph by Raffet)





was moving to support Bulow, he galloped over to him, and AUG 1815.  
 succeeded in persuading him to come to Mont-Saint-Jean.  
 When the first six battalions of the Middle Guard descended  
 into the valley, Ziethen's advanced guard was already at  
 Smoham. This caused the Emperor to post one of these six Napoleon's  
 battalions to the west of the Charleroi road, and committed last card.  
 the other five to Ney for the final attack on the right centre  
 of the Allies. He led them, still in squares,\* in echelon of  
 battalions from the right, with a pair of eight pounders in  
 each interval of the echelon, not straight across to the nearest  
 and weakest part of the enemy's line, but diagonally athwart  
 the undulating ground between the Charleroi and Nivelles  
 roads, against the troops on the allied right which had  
 suffered least during the day. Reille ought surely to have  
 supported their advance by sending forward some brigades  
 on their left, but by some mismanagement these superb  
 battalions went to their doom alone. Of cavalry they had  
 but the support of a squadron or two. A captain of  
 French carabineers left his regiment, galloped across the  
 valley among the skirmishers of H.M. 52nd Regiment,  
 calling out, "Vive le Roi! look out! that — Napoleon  
 will be upon you in half an hour with his Guards."

Sorely torn by the converging fire from the allied line, the  
 first square of the Middle Guard ascended the slope, slippery  
 with blood and mire, and obtained a momentary advantage  
 over the Brunswickers and the British 30th and 73rd. Wel-  
 lington himself, always at hand where the stress was sorest,  
 rallied the Brunswickers, and General Chassé, once an officer  
 in Napoleon's service, brought up Van der Smissen's Dutch  
 battery, which opened fire with good effect. Of Chassé's  
 two brigades, d'Aubremé's was leaving the field in disorder,

\* The statement that the Imperial Guard moved in squares, a formation most  
 suitable for crossing uneven ground under a heavy fire, has been called in  
 question, but M. Houssaye quotes from the MS of General Petit of the  
 Imperial Guard, who assisted in carrying out the formation prescribed by Ney,  
 and is positive on the subject



Æt. 40.

but the other Ditmers formed on the left of 80th and 73rd British and charged in fine order

The second echelon (4th Grenadiers) coming up on the left of the first during this contest, engaged in a hand-to-hand conflict with Sir Colin Halkett's brigade.

An important change had been made in the formation of the allied infantry on this part of the plateau. The attack of the French infantry columns had been met and repulsed in line two deep the fighting formation peculiar to British troops. When the cavalry ascended the slopes, squares were formed, but the fire of squares is ineffective against infantry when the line was attacked by cavalry and infantry combined recourse was had to a new formation, which, while preserving an extended front to deal with infantry possessed some of the weight of a square to sustain the impact of cavalry. The battalions were formed in line four deep.

The 33rd began to yield, Halkett seized one of their colours and, loudly calling on them to bear themselves like men, restored their formation, and the French advance was stayed.

The third and fourth echelons had become fused together during the advance through the deep, uneven ground, and reached the crest as a single column, containing the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 3rd Chasseurs.\* There was nothing in their front, apparently and they had neared the cross-road, when Wellington's voice was heard clear above the storm,

Stand up, Guards! † Then, from the shelter of the way

So many and conflicting are the narratives of this period of the combat that the exact position of the troops and sequence of incidents can never be positively determined. The 1st British Guards received the title of Grenadiers in honour of having defeated the Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard; but the third echelon of the attack, which came in contact with H.M. 1st Guards, were undoubtedly Chasseurs. Where all bore themselves so well, the victors may be well content to divide the honours equally.

† This is the origin of the theatrical "Up, Guards, and at em!" The Guards were lying down, as it was the Duke's orders all troops should do under fire, when not actually engaged. Having bidden them rise he then gave the commanding officers orders to attack (*Order III. 231*).

side banks rose the line of Matland's brigade of Guards, four ANN 1815  
 deep and fifteen hundred strong, which poured a withering  
 volley into the square, and charging, swept them out of the  
 combat

Near the foot of the slope pursued and pursuers encountered the last and left echelon (4th Chasseurs) still unbroken. The British Guards obeyed the command to retire, which they did in double time and in considerable disorder. Regaining the crest, they re-formed on the flank of Colin Halkett, and to the left of Adams's brigade (52nd, 71st, and 95th). Colonel Colborne \* immediately changed his battalion front one-eighth of a circle to the left, so as to bring his whole fire to bear on the last echelon in its advance, a movement which set the seal on the failure of Napoleon's last attack.† Just as the splendours of sunset were flowing over the scene, the last body of Frenchmen that reached the plateau of Mont-Saint-Jean were broken and scattered ‡

At the moment when the leading echelon was pressing back the Brunswickers, the 30th and the 73rd, Ney's fifth horse was shot under him, and General Friant was severely wounded. Believing that the heights had been carried, he rode slowly back to where the Emperor sat between Belle Alliance and Haye Sainte, and reported to him that all was going well at the front. Napoleon was about to lead in person three more battalions of the Guard § to reinforce the fighting line. While they were being marshalled for attack—one battalion deployed with a battalion in close column on either flank—he kept his glass turned upon the conflict in which he was about to bear a part.

\* Afterwards Lord Seaton

† Here, again, professional opinion is irreconcilably divided as to the exact proportion borne by the 52nd and the rest of Adams's brigade, compared with that to be credited to Peregrine Matland's Guards. Colborne claimed that the 52nd changed front and opened fire *before* the charge of the Guards (*Waterloo Letters*, 283)

‡ See Appendix E, p. 93

§ 1st Chasseurs, 2nd Grenadiers, and 2nd Chasseurs

ÆT 46. Suddenly his hand fell.

"Mais ils sont mêlés ! he exclaimed in hollow accents to his aide-de-camp, Count Flahault, who was under no illusion as to what troops were meant. The sun had just set. There was no radiance to prevent all men seeing what was going on out there in the north west.

Defeat  
of the  
Imperial  
Guard.

First the trampled corn was sprinkled, then it was covered with a confused mass of men moving south, behind and among them the sabres of Vivian's hussars and Vandeleur's dragoons rose and fell with direful diligence. "La garde recule ! sounded like a sob in the motionless ranks of the Old Guard, and sped with astonishing swiftness to every part of the field. "La garde recule !" cried the men of Allix, Donzelot, and Marcognet, and began to melt away from the vantage ground they had so nobly won. "La garde recule ! whispered Reille's columns, still unbroken on the left. Far on the right, Durutte's battalions, suddenly confronted by the heads of Zieten's columns, where they had been told to look for Grouchy's, caught up the word. Next, the uneasy murmur

"Nous sommes trahis !" was heard—for was there not treason ? Had not General Bourmont and his staff and sundry other officers openly gone over to the enemy ? "La garde recule !" Oh, fatal cry ! soon swelling into one still more dreadful—last tocsin of the soldier's agony—"Sauve qui peut !" Papelotte and La Haye were abandoned, and from the east, as already from the west, the wreck of the Last Army rolled towards the Charleroi road.

Not ashamed—some in the delirium of success—others under the sheer pang of remembered defeat—to revile the great commander by declaring that before the battle was fairly lost he rode off the field and abandoned to destruction the army which had made him their god. No need to quote from tales of which the tellers had better have held their peace. Nothing jars more harshly on English ears than slander of a beaten foe. Napoleon did his duty to the last. He broke the brigade of the Old Guard into squares, and placed them

Last stand  
of the Old  
Guard.

across the line of flight to the west of the Charleroi road,\* ANN 1815 hoping to rally behind them at least their comrades of the Middle Guard; and, holding in hand his four *escadrons de service* of light cavalry till the pursuit drew near, he launched them, but in vain, against Vivian's hussars

Ney comes along with the crowd—Ney, who has been seeking death and finding no friendly bullet to end this frenzy of defeat—Ney, bareheaded and in rags, shrieking to d'Erlon as they are borne together in the crush, "If you and I come out of this alive, d'Erlon, we shall be hanged!" then succeeds in rallying some of Durutte's division "Come and see how a marshal of France dies!" But these, too, fall away from him Covered with blood and mud and black powder, with a broken sword in his hand, he enters one of the squares of the Old Guard—the only steadfast objects in the hideous torrent of panic and pursuit

When Wellington recognised the supreme moment, he rode forward to the crest of the ground, and, above the smoke-wreaths, clearly defined as a bronze statue against the bright western sky, held his cocked hat aloft and forward No mere theatrical gesture this, we may be sure, but the signal—more rapid than word of mouth—for a general advance, and straightway the whole allied army, except the Highland brigade, the Germans of Ompteda and Kielmansegge, and some batteries which were so built in with corpses that they could not move, descended from the heights where it had patiently endured the fiery storm for nine hours The battalions closed their thinned ranks as they marched, far in advance of the general line was Colborne's 52nd, and on their left the cavalry swept the ground, doubling up the flank of Durutte's scattered array Of the enemy, only Reille's corps on the left and three squares of Napoleon's Old Guard at La Belle Alliance remained in formation Ney himself fought dismounted in the ranks of the Middle Guard not far from the Charleroi road Men fell and fast around him, yet he remained unwounded.

\* *Houssaye*, 402

destiny had marked him for a darker fate. His false move earlier in the day by exhausting Napoleon's reserve of cavalry told with fatal effect after the failure of his attack with the Guard.

All kinds of wild stories have found harbour in this final act of the tragedy of Waterloo. Lamartine has told an admiring public that the Duke drew his sword and charged at the head of the cavalry. His sword was never out of its scabbard all day.\* Here are his own words describing the last act in the drama.

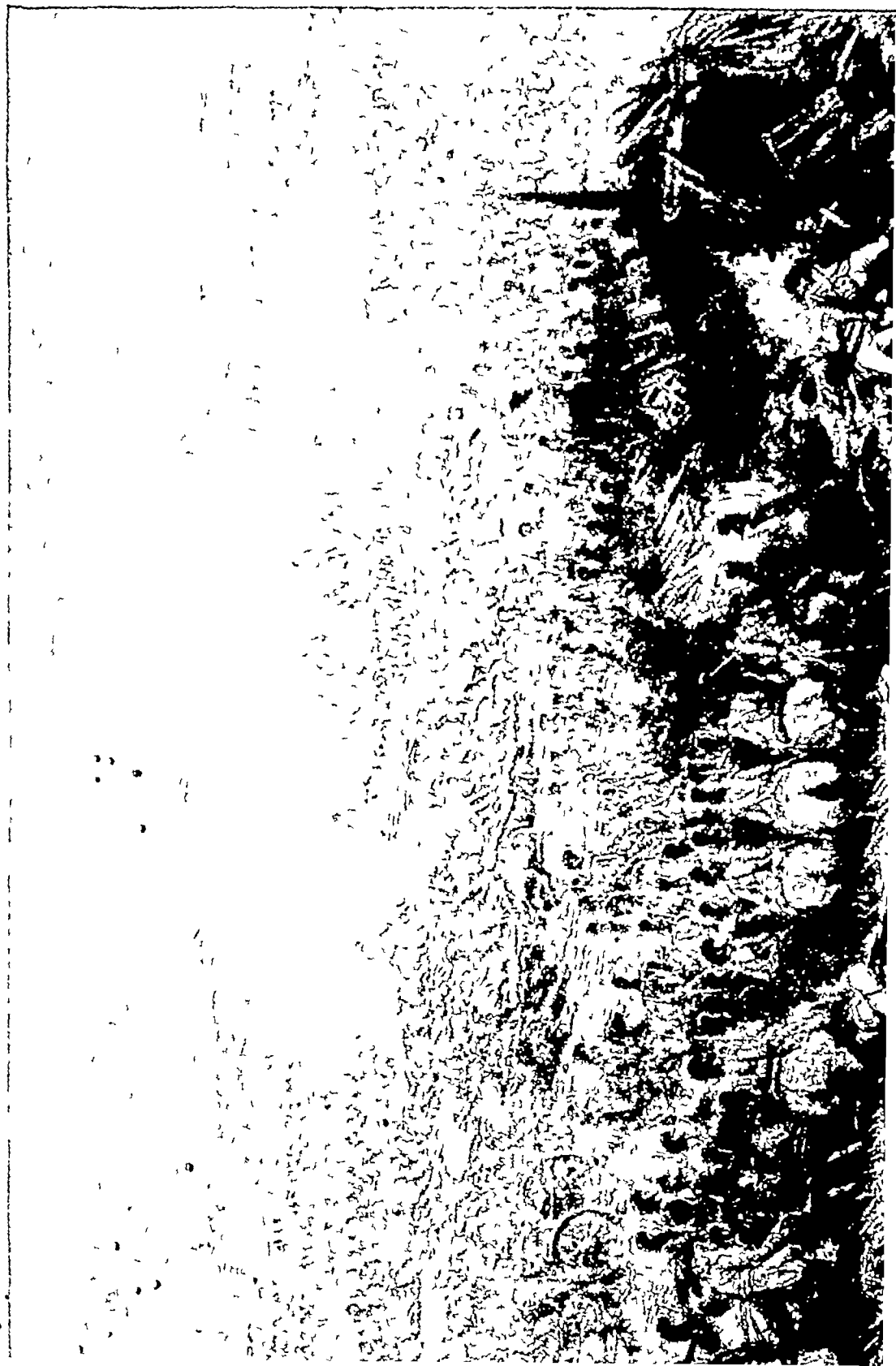
The Infantry was advanced in Line. I halted them for a minute in the bottom that they might be in order to attack some Battalions of the Enemy still on the Heights. The Cavalry halted likewise. The whole moved forward again in very few moments. The Army did not stand the attack. Some had fled before we halted. The whole abandoned their Position. The Cavalry were then ordered to charge and moved round the flanks of the Battalions of Infantry. The Infantry was formed into Columns and moved in pursuit in Columns of Battalions. †

Napoleon  
leaves the  
field.

The dusk began to deepen. The Middle Guard had re-formed its squares, and easily kept the cavalry at bay. But when the allied infantry came up, Napoleon weary of the useless slaughter and seeing these squares riven with a dreadful fire, gave them the order to retreat. He himself, despairing of rallying his flying troops, rode into the square of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Grenadiers, which, with the other two squares of the Old Guard, slowly retreated along the Charleroi road, followed by General Adams's brigade and a battalion of Hanoverian militia. Colonel William Halkett, commanding this militia, attacked the square commanded by General Cambronne, calling on it to surrender. The summons not being complied with, he treated them to a dose of musketry on which the square broke up leaving the General

\* Croker III. 281

† Memorandum by the Duke on Siborne's model of the field of Waterloo written in 1830 (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 515).





# BATTLE OF WATERLOO

18<sup>th</sup> June 1815

CRISIS OF THE BATTLE

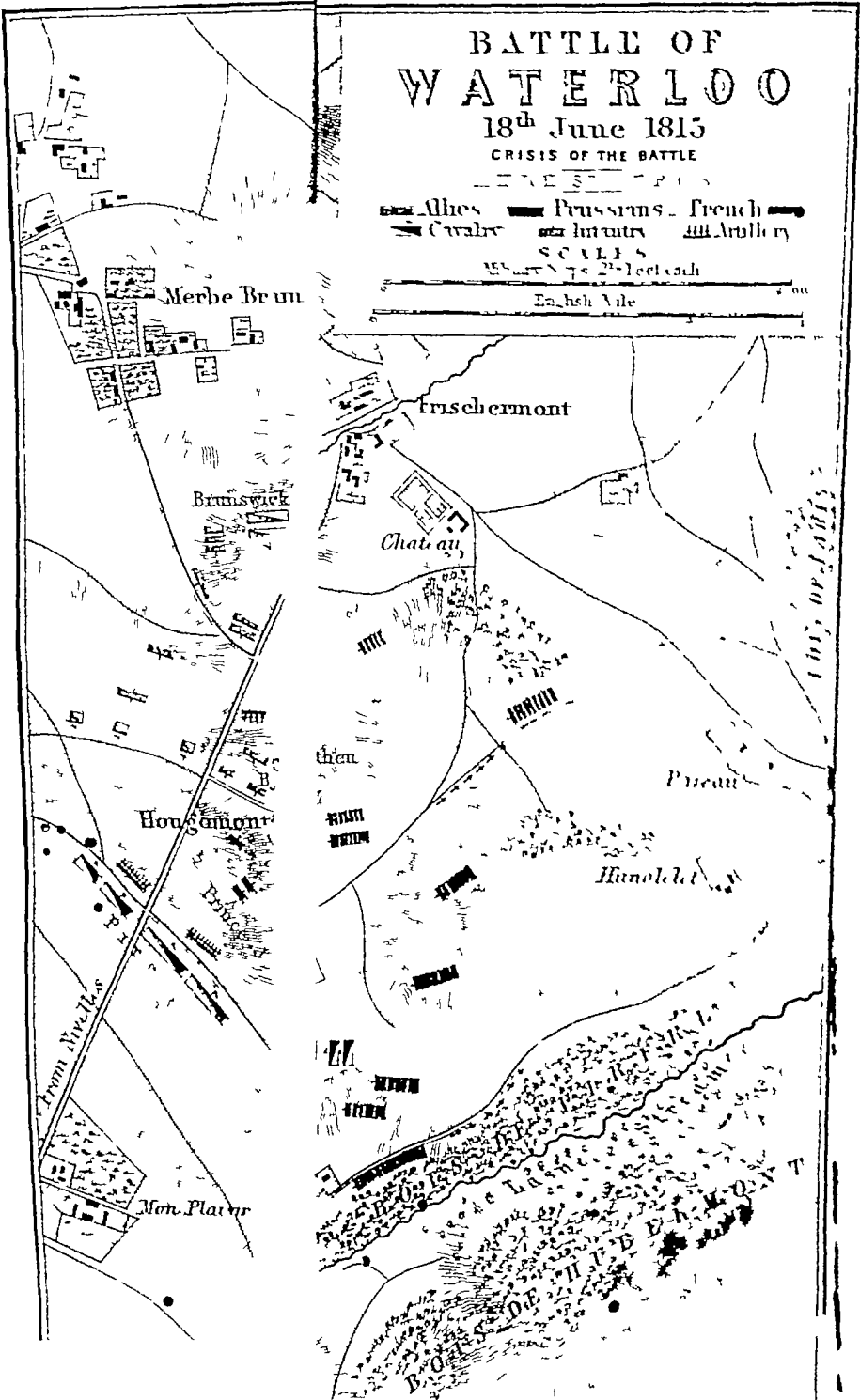
THE SCENES

Allies
  Prussians
  French
  Cavalry
  Infantry
  Artillery

SCALES

1 inch = 2 1/2 feet each

English Mile







and two other officers unprotected Halkett galloped up to the General, and made as if to cut him down, on which he yielded himself prisoner.\*

While this was the state of affairs between Rossomme and La Belle Alliance, the Prussians were driving the Young Guard out of Plancenot The fugitives fled along the Brussels road, crowding round the squares of the Old Guard, who, to preserve their own formation, had the cruel task of driving them off with bayonets and even with bullets This cross current of fugitives took the pressure of the pursuit off the Old Guard, and the Emperor rode out of his square of Grenadiers, pacing in advance of their retreat with Soult, Diouot, Bertrand, and a few *chasseurs à cheval* as escort At the farm of Le Caillou he joined a battalion of chasseurs of the Old Guard, and continued his course with it in the direction of Genappe

About ten o'clock Wellington met Blucher in the dark in the village of Genappe† The old Prince saluted the Duke warmly on both cheeks, and offered to relieve his troops in the pursuit Wellington willingly accepted the offer, for his people had been fighting for ten hours Blucher's men had endured a hard day also, having marched fifteen miles fasting over execrable ground, and fought their way from Frischermont to Plancenot It had been no easy matter for him to keep tryst His men had eaten nothing since the day before, it was only his constant presence and encouragement that had given them the spirit to carry the artillery through the marshes of Lasne

\* It is an unpleasant task to dispel romantic illusions, but *le mot de Cambronne* was something less chivalrous than the traditional "La garde meurt mais ne se rend pas!" The Duke of Wellington used to laugh at it, and to how Cambronne was brought to him just as he was sitting down to dinner in the Waterloo village The Duke told him he was sorry he could not receive him as a guest until he had made his peace with King Louis, who had made him viscount The Duke used to add that there was a set of ladies at Brussels, partisans of the Prince of Orange, called *la vieille garde*, of whom it was said, "Elles ne meurent pas et se rendent toujours!" (*Salisbury MSS*, 1836)

Æt 40. "Come, lads," he cried to some gunners labouring at the wheels of a piece deeply bogged, "you would not have me break my word!"

The Prussians take up the pursuit. So Gneisenau went forward with his dragoons, reaping the harvest of death by the light of the summer moon, and Blücher followed with Bulow's infantry. At Genappe they captured the Emperor's carriage and a vast amount of baggage and artillery. Wellington, in his official despatch, made honourable acknowledgment of what he owed to his faithful ally.

"I should not do justice to my own feelings or to Marshal Blücher and the Prussian army if I did not attribute the successful result of this arduous day to the cordial and timely assistance I received from them. The operation of General Bülow upon the enemy's flank was a most decisive one, and even if I had not found myself in a situation to make the attack which produced the final result, it would have forced the enemy to retire if his attacks should have failed, and would have prevented him from taking advantage of them if they should unfortunately have succeeded."\*

After the battle the Duke went to the little inn in Waterloo, where some dinner was prepared for him and the survivors of his staff. Sir Alexander Gordon† had been brought thither mortally wounded. The Duke caused them to lay him on his own camp-bed, while he himself lay down in the outer room, wrapped in his cloak.

Before going to rest the Duke directed Dr Hume to bring him the list of casualties in the morning, in order that he might include it in his despatch. Dr Hume brought it about 5 a.m., and, finding the Duke asleep, left the paper beside him. Returning later in the morning, he found the Duke awake, having perused the list. His countenance was apparently unchanged, except that under his eyes were two whitish streaks. He had not washed his face since the



FIELD-MARSHAL GEBHARD L. VON BLÜCHER,  
PRINCE OF WAHLSTAAT

(From a Picture in Apsley House)



battle; it was still covered with the mud and grime of <sup>Aug 1815.</sup> the field, and those streaks were the traces of tears he had shed for his lost soldiers \* After writing his despatch at Waterloo early on the morning of the 19th, Wellington called for his horse, and rode into Brussels. Lady Georgina Lennox † calling early on 19th, was struck by the Duke's exceeding sadness—no elation of victory, only sorrow for the lives of so many brave soldiers. It was the countenance, not of a conqueror, but of a fallen General

Indeed, the loss was frightful enough to cast a shadow on the most glorious triumph of arms. The killed and wounded were reckoned among the Allies thus —

British and Hanoverians . . .	11,678
Prussians . . .	6,999
Netherlanders . . .	3,178
Brunswickers . . .	687
Nassau Contingent . . .	643

Total 23,185 officers and men.

Out of twenty-four officers the Scots Greys lost seven killed and nine wounded Captain Cheney, on whom the command of the regiment devolved during the last three hours, had five horses shot under him in half an hour The Cameron Highlanders, out of forty-two officers, lost five killed and twenty-six wounded, the Royal Scots, six killed and twenty-five wounded out of thirty-nine, and so on The accounts of the French losses vary between 18,000 and 30,000 killed and wounded It is certain they lost 227 cannon.

The Duke was as constantly exposed throughout the day as any one, more so, indeed, for he was ever present where the battle was at its closest, yet he remained unhurt. When a cannon-shot took off Lord Fitzroy Somerset's right arm, he was riding with his left arm touching the Duke's right Again, when Lord Uxbridge lost his leg, the cannon-shot which struck him passed first over the withers of Copenhagen

\* See Appendix D, p 91

† Afterwards Lady de Ros.

*Æt* 46. "By God! I've lost my leg," cried Uxbridge. "Have you, by God?" was all the Duke's reply.\* De Lancey also received his mortal wound from a cannon-shot when riding by the Duke's side, and his mind must have been more or less than human had he shown no sense of gratitude for the number and narrowness of his escapes. Nothing is rarer in the vast mass of his correspondence than appeals or even references to the Almighty though it cannot be denied that he often swore by His name, but at 3 a.m. on the morning after the battle, writing to Lady Frances Webster to tell her she might remain in Brussels in perfect safety after enumerating the chief losses he had sustained, he added, "The finger of Providence was upon me, and I escaped unhurt."†

Among all the learned disquisitions and fanciful rhapsodies about this great battle, the Duke's simple, homely description of it to his old comrade-in-arms Lord Beresford, condenses the whole affair into a single paragraph.

You will have heard of our battle of the 18th. Never did I see such a pounding match. Both were what the boxers call gluttons. Napoleon did not manœuvre at all. He just moved forward in the old style, in columns, and was driven off in the old style. The only difference was that he mixed cavalry with his infantry and supported both with an enormous quantity of artillery. I had the infantry for some time in squares, and we had the French cavalry walking about us as if they

\* *Greville*, 2nd Series, I. 185

† When Colonel Gurwood was editing his twelfth volume he paid £30 to an impecunious barrister for the Duke's two letters to Lady F. Webster and asked the Duke whether he approved of their being printed. The Duke at first replied that he did not care whether they were published or not, provided the names were not given, adding, "The finger of Providence ought to be omitted. Afterwards he wrote (1st September 1838) to say they had better be suppressed, as "containing nothing of public or military interest (*Aspley House MSS.*). The letters, however, were printed after the Duke's death in the *Supplementary Despatches* (x. 531). Lady F. Webster was a very pretty woman, daughter of the first Earl of Mountmorris, and wife of an officer in the 9th Light Dragoons. Her husband was on the staff of the Prince of Orange at Waterloo.

had been our own. I never saw the British infantry behave ANN 1815  
so well." \*

Before his crowning victory, the Duke's countrymen had exhausted the catalogue of honours which could be heaped on a single individual. Parliament now purchased the mansion and estate of Strathfieldsaye and bestowed it on the conqueror of Napoleon, to be held by him and his heirs for ever, on condition of presenting a tricolor flag to the Sovereign at Windsor annually, on 18th June. Of the innumerable monuments erected in his honour, perhaps it is only necessary to allude to one, the bronze statue of Achilles in Hyde Park, which was subscribed for by the countrywomen of the Duke, and made out of guns taken at Vittoria and elsewhere. Mention may also be made of one of the Prince Regent's gifts, the colossal marble statue of Napoleon by Canova, which Louis XVIII gave to the Prince Regent after the peace of 1814, and now stands in the staircase at Apsley House. When some critic observed to Canova on the disproportionate smallness of the orb representing the globe, which the figure holds in the left hand, the sculptor replied—"Ah! but you see Napoleon's world did not include Great Britain."

Further  
recogni-  
tion of  
the Duke's  
services

## APPENDIX D

### *The Duke's Conversation about Waterloo*

The following notes of a conversation at Walmer have been preserved in Lady Salisbury's journal for the year 1836 —

*Lady S* "I suppose you must have felt secure of the victory when the Guards withstood the famous charge. What was your feeling at the moment? Did it not surpass all that one can imagine?"

\* *Despatches*, xii 529, The original of this letter was sold by auction in August, 1859, for £21





*The Duke* "That is a feeling of vanity ; one's *first* thought is ANN 1815 for the public service "

*Lady S* "But there *must* be a lasting satisfaction in that feeling of superiority you always enjoy. It is not in human nature it should be otherwise."

*The Duke* "True Still, I come constantly into contact with other persons on equal or inferior terms Perhaps there is no man now existing who would like to meet me on a field of battle ; in that line I am superior But when the war is over and the troops disbanded, what is your great general more than anybody else? . . . I am necessarily inferior to every man in his own line, though I may excel him in others. I cannot saw and plane like a carpenter, or make shoes like a shoemaker, or understand cultivation like a farmer Each of these, *on his own ground*, meets me on terms of superiority. I feel I am but a man." \*

## APPENDIX E

### *The Defeat of the Imperial Guard.*

General Petit's statement, quoted by M Houssaye, that the Middle Guard attacked in five squares, will be keenly disputed by students of military history. Most British eyewitnesses testify to the formation being in two columns, but it is easy to imagine that the original formation of squares in direct échelon would be disordered in the advance under a heavy fire across undulating and muddy ground, covered with crops The dense smoke must have interfered with such a formation being accurately judged from the British position

"I cannot describe positively," wrote Lieut Gawler of the 52nd Regiment, "from my own observation the formation of the enemy, for, when the right of the 52nd subsequently crossed the summit, the smoke was very dense, but it has been

\* *Salisbury MSS*, 1836

Br. 48. confidently stated in the regiment that, as seen from *this* side, it was in two columns in direct échelon—the left considerably to the rear. It has also been stated that at first the opening between the two columns was distinctly visible.”\*

On the other hand, Lieut. S Reed of the 71st Regiment, which was on the right of the 52nd, and supported it in its charge, wrote—

“The Imperial Guard, I think, were either in square or column. I do not think they were in line. We charged three squares of the Guard, whom we broke and pursued. The French squares having separated the 52nd pursued what had been their right square, the other two fell to our lot. †

The third battalion in Adams brigade was the 2nd of the 95th Rifles. Corporal Aldridge, who served twenty two years in that regiment, said, “The French came up in three columns abreast of each other, they looked like quarter distance columns.” ‡ Now a square in movement is not easily to be distinguished from a column at quarter distance, but the fire from the flank of a square when halted is very much more powerful than anything that can be effected by the flank files of a column. When the Guard did halt, its flank fire was most intense, causing a loss to the 52nd of about one hundred and fifty men in less than four minutes. Such a fire could never have come from the flank of a column.

As to the timeworn controversy between the 52nd and the Grenadier Guards for the chief honour in routing the Imperial Guard, his would be an intrepid judgment that were offered to decide it. The case for the 52nd has been set forth at large and in detail in Mr Leake's two volumes on *Lord Seaton's Regiment at Waterloo* while the First Regiment of the Guards—*beati possidentes*—derive their title

of Grenadiers from the general order of 29th July, 1815, ANN 1815 '—  
which declares that the Prince Regent has been pleased to  
confer that title upon them in commemoration of their having  
defeated the Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo  
In such a noble rivalry, arising from sources so complex,  
and so remote, let the countrymen of these brave troops  
pronounce the verdict—"Honours easy!"

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION

1815-1818.

June 19 1815	How the news of victory came to England. Napoleon's flight to Paris.			Duke with the French, and the causes thereof. Trial and execution of Marshal Ney
" 15	His surrender to Captain Maitland, R.N. at Rochefort.	Nov 20		The army of occupation.
" 29	The British and Prussians encamp before Paris.	" 1817		The Duke appointed chief commissioner of arbitration and finance.
" 29-July 4.	Negotiations for an armistice.	Feb. 10 1818.		Attempt to assassinate the Duke.
July 5	The Convention of Paris.	" 21		The British Cabinet recall the Duke from Paris.
" 6 and 7	Occupation of Paris by the allied armies.	" 25		The Duke's one act of disobedience.
" 8	Restoration of Louis XVIII. Moderating influence of the Duke upon the Allies. Unpopularity of the	October 30		Evacuation of France by the Allies.
		<i>Appendix F</i>		Influence of the Duke of Wellington on the character of the British Army

**F**AR different was the manner in which the glorious tidings found its way from Waterloo to London from the way news of battle is flashed about the globe at the present time. We can imagine how field correspondents would feed the wires for us now how the evening papers with rapid editions would keep us abreast of every movement and intensify the



LADY BAGOT, LADY BURGHESH, LADY F SOMERSET,  
THE DUKE'S NIECES

(From a Drawing by Lawrence at Apsley House)

[Vol. II p. 96]



agony of every ominous phase; how the offices would be ANN 1815 besieged by eager crowds all night, and the best or worst be known before another sun Four score years ago the utmost speed at man's command lay in the legs of a good horse \*

Almost the only individual of Wellington's staff remaining un injured at the close of the day was the Hon Henry Percy † How the news came to Eng-land He had left the Duchess of Richmond's ball, and ridden to Quatre-Bras without having time to change even his shoes, and him the Duke charged to carry to England the despatch announcing the victory. His mission was anticipated The financial house of Rothschild, with shrewd business eye to Stock Exchange movements, had a fast sloop lying off Antwerp, which reached England some hours before Percy ‡ Landing at Dover, Percy posted with all speed to London, with two eagles § of the Imperial Guard sticking out of the windows of his chaise, one on either side Arriving at the Horse Guards late in the evening, he was told the Duke of York was dining out He went on to Lord Castlereagh's, the Foreign Secretary was dining at the same house as the Commander-in-chief in St James Square Arriving there, he found the Prince Regent was of the dinner-party, he demanded an immediate audience, and was shown into the dining-room carrying his papers and the French eagles

"Let the ladies leave the room," said the Prince Regent as soon as he perceived Percy, then, holding a hand out to the travel-stained soldier—"Welcome, *Colonel Percy!*"

"Go down on your knee," exclaimed the Commander-in-chief, "and kiss hands for the step you have obtained"

\* Pigeon-flying, as a means of conveying intelligence, though well known at that time, does not seem to have been employed during the campaign The semaphore telegraph was used sometimes between ships and fixed points on shore

† Son of the Earl of Beverley His eldest brother succeeded to the dukedom of Northumberland, on the death of the 4th Duke, in 1865

‡ Consols stood at 58½ when Rothschild's messenger arrived Enormous profits were realised on the rise

§ Every French regiment possessed an eagle, but, as each regiment consisted of five battalions, every eagle represented the equivalent of five stands of colours



**Apr 4a.** Next and before the despatch was opened, numberless inquiries were addressed to him about different officers. His answer was so often "dead" or "severely wounded" that the Prince Regent burst into tears.

Napoleon arrived at Charleroi about daybreak on 19th June, with a small mounted escort. Halting at Laon on the 20th, he held a council of war. He desired to assemble there the remains of his army. Prince Jérôme had collected 20 000 and Grouchy, who had renewed the combat with Thielmann at Wavre on the 19th, till apprized of the defeat of the *grands armées* had been ordered to march on Laon with all speed, but the opinion of his Generals being adverse to further resistance, Napoleon continued his flight to Paris, handing over to Soult the command of such troops as he could collect. There is no occasion to retrace here the dismal close of the Hundred Days, of the fallen Emperor's reception in his capital, of his abdication for the second time on 22nd June, in favour of his son of the rejection of that son by the Chamber of Representatives and the election instead of an Executive Commission of five. Still believing himself to be the Man of Destiny and "regarding himself still as the first soldier of the nation," he offered his services as General to defend France with 70 000 men still under arms, but they were refused, and on the 3rd July Napoleon was at Rochefort, seeking a passage to America. Baffled by the vigilance of the British cruisers, he surrendered himself on the 15th a prisoner to Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon*, and penned his famous letter to the Prince Regent, desiring to "seat himself at the hearth of the British people."

On 21st June the allied army crossed the French frontier, Valenciennes and Quesnoy being promptly blockaded by the British, Maubeuge and Landrezy by the Prussians. Cambray was taken by escalade on the 24th, on which day King Louis, in consequence of Wellington's invitation, joined the British headquarters at Le Cateau. On the 26th the Duke received overtures from the French Commissioners for a suspension of

Second  
abdica-  
tion of  
Napoleon.

Wellington and  
Blücher  
enter  
France.

hostilities, which Blücher and he declined,\* believing the abdication to be only a trick to gain time. The Commissioners were informed that no armistice could be granted as long as Napoleon Buonaparte was in Paris and at liberty, and the Allies continued to advance on Paris with 120,000 men. On 2nd July Wellington fixed his headquarters at Gonesse. M. Brialmont has attributed the rapidity of their advance to a concerted scheme between the British and Prussian Marshals for the political purpose of obtaining the submission of Paris before Russia and Austria could enter the field, thereby obtaining for Great Britain and Prussia a preponderating influence in the settlement of the affairs of France. The substance of this insinuation, so far as Wellington is concerned, is contained in his letter to Prince Blücher of 2nd July, in which, after dissuading the Prince from his project of attacking Paris at once, he observes—

"It is true we shall not have the vain triumph of entering Paris at the head of our victorious troops; but, as I have already explained to your Highness, I doubt our having the means at present of succeeding in an attack upon Paris; and, if we are to wait till the arrival of Marshal Prince Wrede to make the attack, I think we shall find the Sovereigns disposed, as they were last year, to spare the capital of their ally (Louis XVIII.), and either not to enter the town at all, or enter it under an armistice, such as it is in your power and mine to sign this day." †

After having finally off the scene, the way was open for T  
consequently, on 3rd July, the Convention of <sup>N</sup><sub>P</sub>  
Paris, to which the chief conditions were—a  
suspension of the evacuation of Paris by the 50,000 or  
60,000 troops, the withdrawal of all the French  
forces from the town, and the peaceful occupation  
of the capital by the Allies. Meanwhile the Prussian  
Government, in order to facilitate the entry, had permitted  
Napoleon to leave Paris, which Wellington having intended

Æt 48. remonstrated. In regard to the first, he urged in a letter of admirable tact and tone that the levy if made at all, should be made with the general consent of the Allies, and in regard to the second, he pointed out that one of the articles in the Convention reserved all public monuments and buildings to be dealt with according to the will of the allied Sovereigns.\* Luckily, Prince Blücher was neither thin-skinned nor jealous of the renown of his puissant colleague, he was essentially what is known as a good fellow and suspended his project in both respects, though grumbling mightily until the arrival of the Sovereigns. Not the less did Wellington, as the more distinguished of the two commanders, incur the odium of having been the author of both schemes, and was execrated by Frenchmen of all parties for the threatened injuries which, in fact, he was the sole agent in averting.

There were other circumstances which tended to bring the Duke into disfavour with the Court party. It appeared to the allied Sovereigns that France, if not dismembered, must at least be reduced to such limits as would prevent her being in future a menace to the peace of Europe, indeed, Lord Liverpool advocated that she should be deprived of the territory annexed by Louis XIV† To this project Wellington offered strenuous resistance. His letters on the subject must be studied in order to understand how far his views extended beyond the limits of his profession—how great he was in statesmanship as well as in strategy. While agreeing that the Revolution and the Treaty of Paris had left France too strong for the rest of Europe weakened and bankrupt as the other continental Powers had become from the long strain of Napoleonic war and exaction, and by the destruction of all the fortresses in the Low Countries and in Germany he argued that the Allies neither had the right to make any material alteration in the Treaty of Paris, nor would they attain peace by demanding concessions which Louis XVIII. might summon his people to resist.

Moderation of the Duke's views.

\* Despatches, xii. 552.

† Suppl. Despatches, xh 52.

“That which has been the object of the Allies has been to put ANN. 1815 an end to the French Revolution, to obtain peace for themselves and their people, to have the power of reducing their overgrown military establishments, and the leisure to attend to the internal concerns of their several nations, and to improve the situation of their people. The Allies took up arms against Buonaparte because it was certain that the world could not be at peace as long as he should possess, or should be in a situation to obtain, supreme power in France; and care must be taken, in making the arrangements consequent upon our success, that we do not leave the world in the same unfortunate situation respecting France that it would have been in if Buonaparte had continued in possession of his power . . . Revolutionary France is more likely to distress the world than France, however strong in her frontier, under a regular Government, and that is the situation in which we ought to endeavour to place her. With this view, I prefer the temporary occupation of some of the strong places, and to maintain for a time a strong force in France, both at the expense of the French Government and under strict regulation, to the permanent cession of even all the places which in my opinion ought to be occupied for a time. These measures will not only give us, during the period of occupation, all the military security which could be expected from the permanent cession, but, if carried into execution in the spirit in which they are conceived, they are in themselves the bond of peace.”

This temperate counsel prevailed and was acted on, but Wellington received no credit for its leniency, either from the French people or the courtiers of King Louis. On the contrary, the royalist party deeply resented his action in obtaining the restoration to office of the regicide Fouché, who was, moreover, more than suspected of having been in the plot to bring back Napoleon. Fouché, a member of the Convention which ordered the execution of Louis XVI, had been created by Napoleon Duc d'Otrante, and served under him during the Hundred Days. A thorough time-server, he now was anxious to obtain high office under Louis XVIII. It has been asserted persistently that Wellington had long been in

Unpopularity of the Duke with the French

Æt 48. It is said that those of Napoleon's Generals who had become Royalists turned their backs upon the Duke at the Court of the Tuileries. Observing this, King Louis made some excuse for their rudeness, but the Duke replied lightly, "*Sire, ils sont si accoutumés à me tourner le dos qu'ils n'en ont pas encore perdu l'habitude!*"\*

Trial and  
execution  
of Marshal  
Ney

There remains to be noticed another event in relation to which the Duke of Wellington's conduct excited attention and some unfavourable comment far beyond the limits of France. When Louis XVIII. was restored in 1814, his return to the capital was signalled by none of those punitive, still less vindictive, measures which usually follow the re-assertion of legitimacy as in the case of Ferdinand VII.'s restoration to the throne of Spain. The Revolution and the Empire had been overcome after a long struggle, but those who had taken active parts in them were not treated as rebels, save that Napoleon himself had been placed under restraint. But the events of the Hundred Days had been marked by acts of such flagrant treachery on the part of those in high military command that to condone them altogether would have been to admit that every private soldier executed for desertion or disobedience had been the victim of murder. The capitulation of Paris, indeed, had provided that the lives, liberty and property of the inhabitants should be respected by the allied Generals and their troops, but this by no means could be held to preclude the established French Government from such disciplinary acts as might be determined on. Nevertheless, when in November a list of persons proscribed was published by Fouché, an attempt was made to prove that the clause in the capitulation referred to was of the nature of a general amnesty and that the Duke of Wellington, as one of the parties to the capitulation, was guilty of a breach of faith in permitting the proscription.

c Among the persons so proscribed were Marshal Ney and

\* Sir they are so much accustomed to turn their backs upon me, that they have not yet lost that habit!

Colonel Labedoyère, who had both betrayed, in a singularly ANN 1815 disgraceful way, the trust of a command accepted from Louis XVIII. Neither of these persons was found in Paris after the capitulation, and it was to persons so found that the capitulation exclusively referred. Ney and Labedoyère, both left Paris under feigned names before the Allies entered it, but both were indiscreet enough to return. No doubt the King's Government would have been glad to let them leave the country quietly, but they did not choose to do so; their presence was denounced by zealous officials in the provinces; they were tried and condemned to death.

Ney and his wife made passionate appeals to the Duke of Wellington to interfere. He declined to do so. Why? Not, assuredly, because he bore resentment against the brave General whom he had encountered and defeated on so many fields. Not because there was any tinge of cruelty in his character, his whole career is one long testimony to his natural clemency, but is also a testimony to justice. Had Ney been unjustly condemned, Wellington undoubtedly would have exerted the influence he had so often used over the actions of King Louis, and obtained a pardon. He did intercede with the King on behalf of General le Comte de Lobau, because, he said, "although a faithful servant of Buonaparte, and perhaps the most active and useful, he was never employed by the King, and therefore did not betray him." But Ney's treachery had been of a peculiarly heinous kind. At the very moment that he set out from Paris, proclaiming loudly that he would bring back Napoleon in an iron cage, he was in secret league with the invader. Had Wellington interfered he would have felt that he was acting unworthily in obtaining for an officer of the highest rank that which he could not have asked had the culprit been a private soldier caught in the act of deserting to the enemy. It was the subject of his frequent complaint that, under the British military code as it then was, officers often escaped the punishment due to their breaches of duty, while the non-

Æt 48. horses—may be put down in peace, and upon the renewal of war it is more easy to recruit them, or even horses for the artillery, than it is to get together a good body of infantry. For this reason I would recommend you not to lose your good infantry if you can keep it, and to reform (I reduce) rather the horses of your cavalry and artillery to the utmost, and all the expensive parts of your establishment.” \*

Appointed  
Chief Com-  
missioner  
of Arbitra-  
tion and  
Finance.

It had become customary whenever a difficulty of unusual magnitude arose in European politics to call in the aid of the Duke of Wellington. Under the Convention of Paris a commission of diplomacy and finance was appointed, consisting of Sir Charles Stuart, Count de Goltz Baron de Vincent and General Pozzo di Borgo representing respectively Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia, and charged with the settlement of claims sent in by nearly every Government in Europe on behalf of every town and village, every province and parish, where French troops had made their presence felt during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Against these had to be weighed counterclaims on behalf of the French Government, and in the complicated calculations which arose, the Commissioners freely availed themselves of the Duke's advice. Still they made but slow progress at the end of nearly two years of deliberation it became obvious that the allied Sovereigns had under-estimated the extent of these claims, which, by midsummer of 1817 already amounted to fifty millions sterling, although the claims of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal had not yet been lodged. Clearly the resources of France would prove unequal to meet these demands, added to the cost of the indemnity and the expense of the army of occupation. Thus matters were drifting to a deadlock when, on 30th October 1817 the Emperor of Russia wrote under his own hand to the Duke of Wellington as to one who, placed at the head of the military forces of the European alliance, had contributed more than once, by the wisdom and moderation which distinguished him, to the

reconciliation of weighty interests," \* expressing his desire ANN. 1817  
 that the Duke should defer to the wishes of the allied  
 Powers and of all interested parties by placing himself at the  
 head of the Commission, and arbitrating on the claims with a  
 view to arriving at a speedy and practicable means of liquidat-  
 ing them † He accepted this post—*une position nouvelle en*  
*Europe*, ‡ as he justly termed it—and from this point his  
 despatches become simply bewildering in their number and  
 the intricacy of the calculations set forth and received from  
 his correspondents No idea can be formed of the nature  
 of his labours, or of the amount of personal consideration  
 bestowed by him on details, except by an examination of the  
 letters in 1817 and 1818 Not only did he succeed in con-  
 solidating the claims against France into one manageable sum,  
 but he arranged that, although this was a large reduction  
 from the aggregate of claims, France should be held to have  
 liquidated them when she made payment of that amount to  
 the Allies, who should undertake settlement with the  
 creditors; and to enable the French Government to make  
 this payment, Wellington negotiated a loan for them with  
 the leading financiers of Europe.

"Since Baring left me, as I generally spend the greatest part  
 of every morning now with money-changers, Rothschild has been  
 with me, and he says that he is certain that the French Govern-  
 ment will experience no difficulty in realising within the year,  
 that is, twelve months, the whole sum which they want" §

The pages of history may be searched in vain for a parallel Unique  
position  
attained  
by the  
Duke  
 to the position of Wellington. Great conquerors, like  
 Alexander or Napoleon, have wielded more extensive powers,  
 but the voluntary assignment<sup>u</sup> of undisputed ascendancy by  
 crowned heads and diplomatists to the subject of an alien  
 monarch is unique in the history of civilisation At the age  
 of eight-and-forty Wellington was the most conspicuous<sup>v</sup>

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii 119

† *Ibid*, 156

‡ *Ibid*, 212

§ *Ibid*, 261, 9th Feb, 1818



Æt. 48. figure—the most exalted individual in the world. His good sword had won him equal rank with the greatest captains, his capacity for rule, his inflexible rectitude, his superiority to all intrigue and suspicion of self-seeking, his far-seeing sagacity—these drew upon him the choice of the Sovereigns to place him in the most critical post of administration and diplomacy \*

His  
scrupulous  
avoidance  
of selfish  
ends.

It is to be noted how scrupulous the Duke was not to turn the trust reposed in him to his private advantage, and thus in small matters as well as in great. When the Governments of allied States conferred on him high military rank carrying with it handsome emoluments in accepting the rank he invariably declined the pay. As Spanish Generalissimo he had been entitled to draw £8,000 a year, instead of which he allowed the money to accumulate, and, at the close of the war handed it over as a fund for the benefit of the Spanish army. In the same spirit he expressed quick displeasure on hearing that certain horses of the pontoon train had been employed to draw the carriages of the Duchess of Wellington and the Duchess of Richmond from Valenciennes to Cambrai, on their way to a review.

‘As one of these carriages is mine,’ he wrote to Sir George Wood commanding the artillery ‘and this example may be drawn into a precedent of using for private convenience the horses belonging to the public, than which nothing could be more injurious to his Majesty’s service, I am anxious to take this opportunity of recalling your particular attention to his Majesty’s orders and regulations on the subject and I beg that

\* In Lady Salisbury’s interesting notes of conversations with the Duke there is one of an observation describing the illuminant process of a penetrating intellect. ‘There is a curious thing that one feels sometimes; when you are considering a subject, suddenly a whole train of reasoning comes before you like a flash of light; you see it all (moving his hand as if something appeared before him, his eye with its brightest expression), yet it takes you perhaps two hours to put on paper all that has occurred to your mind in an instant. Every part of the subject, the bearings of all its parts upon each other and all the consequences, are there before you. (Salisbury MSS.).

on all future occasions . . . those sent in charge [of horses ANN 1818 belonging to the public] may have orders in writing not to allow them to be employed for the convenience of any officers in his Majesty's service, or of any of his Majesty's subjects, without an order in writing signed by me " \*

It was not in the nature of things that one in such a peculiarly influential position as the Duke of Wellington should avoid incurring the hostility of parties and persons. The Court party resented the counsels of clemency which he urged in regard to the regicides, royalists, as well as Buonapartists and revolutionaries of every degree, chafed more and more because of the hateful presence of the army of occupation, of which he was the head, and because of the stipulated payments in exacting which he had been appointed the chief agent. Lastly, there was a mass of officers on half-pay and disbanded soldiers on no pay, seething with discontent, a fertile soil for a rank crop of conspiracy. Many of the persons obnoxious to the restored monarchy of France had been excluded from that country, and received passports requiring them to reside in Brussels, more or less under police supervision. These persons published a series of libels in certain newspapers, for which, as they imputed base and mischievous acts and motives to the Duke in his public as well as in his private character, it was necessary to prosecute and punish them. It then became apparent that an extensive revolutionary plot was in process of maturing at Brussels; that many of those engaged in it were on intimate terms with persons in the confidence of the Belgian Government, and were receiving assistance and encouragement from at least one British nobleman. One of the leaders of the conspiracy was Comte Victor de Cruquembourg, whose brother was aide-de-camp to the Prince of Orange, and the Prince himself was known to be indisposed to interfere with the utmost freedom of political opinion and its expression. His unpopularity in France

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii 92

Æt. 43. figure—the most exalted individual in the world. His good sword had won him equal rank with the greatest captains his capacity for rule, his inflexible rectitude, his superiority to all intrigue and suspicion of self-seeking, his far-seeing sagacity—these drew upon him the choice of the Sovereigns to place him in the most critical post of administration and diplomacy \*

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*Æt* 48. proclivities were destined to sustain a severe shock by an event which took place early in 1818

Already on 25th June, 1816 an attempt had been made to destroy the Duke's house in the Rue des Champs Elysées, on the occasion of his giving a ball to the French princes. Smoke was perceived issuing from the cellar shortly after midnight, on search being made a quantity of combustibles and explosives, including a barrel of oil and bottles filled with gunpowder were found to have been laid there and a match applied. It was a narrow escape, because the explosion of the powder would have interfered with any attempt to extinguish the flames had the discovery been delayed but a few minutes. The affair however was hushed up the Duke had previously arranged to start for England next day in order to take a course of Cheltenham waters, and no attempt was made to bring to justice the miscreants, who were generally supposed to be Buonapartist malcontents.

Attempted  
assassina-  
tion of the  
Duke.

The second attempt on his life was more nearly successful, and was distinguished by certain very disquieting circumstances. Lieut. General Sir George Murray serving once more under his old chief received a letter written in Brussels on 30th January 1818 by Lord Kinnaird, a gentleman who had made himself conspicuous by his avowed sympathy with the revolutionary conspirators and by liberal contributions to their money chest. He told Murray that a French refugee, under sentence of death, had desired him to obtain the interest of the Duke of Wellington to procure for him liberty to return to Paris but that he (Kinnaird) had declined "both because I believed the Duke did not interfere, and because there seemed to be no pretence whatever for asking such interference. The fellow then asked if Kinnaird would intercede for him with M. de Cases, if he revealed a plot which was about to be put in effect against the Duke's life.

10 All the man wanted was a safe conduct to carry him to Paris when he would undertake to point out to the police within twenty four hours the hired assassin who had been

waiting his opportunity for more than four months.\* The Duke, when Murray laid the matter before him, made very light of it, there never was a less likely subject for intimidation than he. Murray was directed to reply that, unless Lord Kinnaird knew to the contrary, his acquaintance was probably "a mere humbug, and will obtain nothing by the line he has taken" † He expressed, in addition, the wish, not unnatural in the circumstances, that Lord Kinnaird should communicate the name of his informant.

Lord Kinnaird's letter was received on the morning of 8th February, Murray's reply was written in the afternoon. Two days later, on the 10th, the Duke dined with Sir Charles Stuart, at whose house, among others, he met Marshal Grouchy and Madame De Staël. The Duchess of Wellington was not residing in Paris at this time. His own hotel has long since been improved off the plan of Paris: it stood in the Rue des Champs Elysées, and was entered by a *porte cochère* at an awkward angle to the street, and so narrow that the two sentries were obliged to fall back each time a carriage passed, in, the sentry boxes being outside the gate. The Duke returned from dinner soon after midnight, and just as the carriage turned into the entry, a fellow stepped forward and fired a pistol in at the window.

The coachman instantly whipped up his horses and dashed into the courtyard. The Duke, who had been leaning back in his carriage, heard the report, but did not see the flash. Thinking his coachman had knocked down one of the sentries, whose musket had gone off, on alighting he asked him what on earth he meant by driving in at such a pace, and told him he had knocked down a sentry. "I saw a man fire at your Grace," replied the coachman.

Two of the Duke's servants coming along the street heard the report, saw the flash, and the assassin running away, one of them proposed to stop him. "No, no," said the other, "it's only a row between some damned Frenchies, best keep out of it" ‡

\* *Sund. Dispatches*, xii. 274.

† *ibid.* 274.

Æt. 48. The French Government were, or affected to be, incredulous of the genuine character of the attempt, but warnings had arrived from other sources than Lord Kinnaird, which left no doubt whatever of the existence of an extensive conspiracy against the Duke's life. He had, besides, received numerous anonymous letters, to which he had paid not the slightest attention \* but, the attempt having been made, he insisted on due diligence being shown in order to discover the culprits. He sent Lord Kinnaird's letter to be laid before the King of the Netherlands that nobleman having explained that his sense of honour would not permit him to reveal the name of his informant. The worst part of the affair was that the Prince of Orange—the Duke's brother-in-arms at Waterloo—was implicated in the conspiracy by the extent he was known to have encouraged and sheltered the French refugees. In reply to the Prince's letter of hot disclaimer (which, curiously enough, was not written till two months after the outrage), the Duke replied calmly—

‘I assure your Royal Highness that the idea never did nor never could have entered my mind that you had any knowledge of the plot, which I believe nobody now doubts was formed by the French refugees in the Netherlands, to assassinate me. Those who know me best will do me the justice to say that, whenever the idea was suggested in my presence, I always answered that I would as soon suspect my own son as I could your Royal Highness, but I will not conceal from your Royal Highness that this occurrence has brought your name into discussion in a way very disagreeable to your friends.’†

Lord Kinnaird's connection with the conspirators led him into a good deal of trouble. As he persisted in refusing to give up the name of his informant, orders were issued by the Belgian Government for his arrest. Leaving Brussels secretly he took his informant with him to Paris, choosing to construe a passage in a letter from the Duke to Lord Clancarty

\* *Sketches*, 76.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 480.



FREDERICK WILLIAM, PRINCE OF ORANGE,  
AFTERWARDS FIRST KING OF THE NETHERLANDS





British Minister in Brussels, as an efficient safe conduct for his companion.\* On arriving in Paris, both were arrested, but Lord Kinnaird was released at the request of the Duke, who took him into his own house, otherwise, as he wrote to Lord Bathurst, "he would probably have been lodged in the Conciergerie, which I certainly should not have liked" † His lordship made but a shabby return for the Duke's protection. He left Paris on 15th April, telling his host he was going to Brussels. ‡ This was merely a blind to deceive the police, because it was found that he had gone two stages along the road to Amiens. He left a sting behind him. On the day of his departure he addressed a letter, and an exceedingly long memorandum, to the French Chamber of Peers, accusing the Government and, by implication, the Duke of Wellington of breach of faith in the arrest of the informer Mainet. Wellington simply characterised this malicious document, drawn up by one enjoying his hospitality and protection at the moment, as "certainly a very impudent production, but I think I ought not to give it any answer" §

Lord Kinnaird accuses the Duke of bad faith.

The judicial inquiry was prolonged for many months both in Paris and Brussels. It was ascertained beyond all moral doubt that the man who fired the shot was one Cantillon, an ex-sergeant of dragoons, and that he acted in the pay and under the direction of a large number of persons, chiefly old officers *en demi-soldat* of Napoleon's armies, but although many of them and Cantillon himself were kept in custody for a long time, no one was punished. Cantillon was committed for trial, but was acquitted by the French jury, which was not

\* "It may be proper to mention to you that the French Government are disposed to go any length in the way of negotiation with the person mentioned by Lord Kinnaird, or others, to discover the plot, and to co-operate with the Government of the King of the Netherlands on the subject" (*Suppl Despatches*, xii 328)

† *Suppl Despatches*, xii 382

‡ *Ibid*, 479

§ *Ibid*, 335 Lord Kinnaird acted very indiscreetly, and incurred suspicion of much from which the Duke freely acquitted him. But when he returned to England Lady Holland dubbed him "Oliver" Kinnaird

Ex 48. surprising, considering the amount of popular sympathy he had secured. Among the swarm of squibs—straws which show the direction of the wind—the following doggerel affords a fair sample of the quality and spirit —

“Mia a juster est un défaut;  
Il le manqua—et voici comme,  
L'imbécille vint trop hant,  
Il l'avait pris pour un grand homme !” \*

In the mind of one man, at least there can have been no doubt of Cantillon's guilt for Napoleon added a codicil to his will at St. Helena, devising 10 000 francs to him in acknowledgment of the service he had attempted to render his country by the murder of Wellington!

“Cantillon,” ran this precious document, “had as much right to assassinate that oligarchist, as Wellington had to send me to perish on the rock of St. Helena,” a parallel which, as Sir Walter Scott pointed out betrays a reasoning either infirm or insincere. “If both were wrong, why reward the ruffian with a legacy? but if both were right, why complain of the British Government for detaining him at St. Helena?”

The  
Return  
Govern-  
ment recall  
the Duke  
from Paris.

Lord Bathurst communicated to the Duke the unanimous instruction of the British Cabinet that he should avoid further risks by withdrawing from Paris to his headquarters at Cambrai,† and, in a separate letter conveyed the Prince Regent's commands to the same effect.

“His Royal Highness deeply impressed with the conviction that the preservation of a life of such inestimable importance is paramount to all other considerations, has commanded me to inform your Grace that it is his pleasure that you should,

\* “Aiming badly is a blunder;  
The idiot missed, and cheated fate;  
He aimed too high—and little wonder!  
He thought his man was something great.”

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 325.

without delay, quit Paris and proceed to the headquarters at ANN 1818.\*  
 Cambrai." \*

Hence arose the solitary instance on record of disobedience to the orders of his superiors on the part of this great disciplinarian. The Duke's one act of disobedience.

"I only regret," ran his reply to Bathurst, "that the Cabinet did not, as they usually have done, consult my opinion before they decided on a case in which I am principally and personally concerned, and on a line of action depending on particular circumstances existing here at the moment, of which I must be a better judge than anybody else. It is very hard to place me in the situation of being obliged to disobey, or even to delay to obey, the positive order of the Prince Regent, but I must do the latter at all events, as I conceive the public interests require it." †

No doubt the Duke was doing valuable public service in Paris by bringing about the liquidation of international claims and hastening to a close the foreign occupation of France, but one can read between these lines the repugnance of a proud spirit to the faintest suspicion of being intimidated, and this is still more apparent in other passages of this letter.

"It must not be supposed that the allied Ministers here are very cordially united, either in their objects or councils, because they don't break out. The truth is that I keep them together, but if I were to withdraw from Paris altogether, and particularly if I were to do so in a manner which should shake the public respect for me, you would no longer see that union of councils and objects which has prevailed here since the peace. In short, I have no hesitation in stating it as my opinion that, after assassination, the greatest public and private calamity which could happen would be to obey the order of the Prince Regent. Indeed, I don't know that I should not prefer that the assassin should have succeeded, as at least I should have been respected." ‡

\* *Suppl<sup>d</sup> Despatches*, xii 326

† *Ibid*, 333

‡ *Ibid*, 335.

*Æt* 48. — surprising, considering the amount of popular sympathy he had secured. Among the swarm of equibs—straws which show the direction of the wind—the following doggerel affords a fair sample of the quality and spirit —

“Mal ajuster est un défaut;  
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L'imbecille vint trop hant,  
Il l'avait pris pour un grand homme!”

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The French Government most recall the Duke from Paris.

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\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii 326

† *Ibid*, 333

‡ *Ibid*, 335.

ÆT 48.

Thus calmly defiant, Wellington remained at his post in Paris till the end of April. By that time he had succeeded in persuading the Powers to accept a sum of 240 000 000 francs (£9 600 000) as settlement in full of all claims instead of the gross amount of 800 000 000 outside the expenses of the army of occupation. He had also carried towards completion the negotiation of loans to the French Government by the English houses of Hope and Co and Baring Brothers. In connection with the last matter he went to London early in May and by the middle of that month was back at Cambrai. In September following the representatives of the Powers met in conference at Aix la-Chapelle to take into consideration the propriety of withdrawing the army of occupation. The Duke had previously resisted proposals which had been urged, not only by the French Government, but by the Emperor of Russia,\* for the anticipation of the term of three years, which had been fixed under the Convention of Paris as the minimum, although he had consented to a reduction of the force in 1817 by 30 000 men. Negotiations proceeded so smoothly that, on 5th October the Duke was able to write to Lord Bathurst asking for ships to be sent at once to Calais Antwerp and Ostend for the embarkation of the British contingent. On the 30th he issued from Cambrai his *Ordre du jour* bidding farewell to the troops of different nationalities, and thanking them for their excellent behaviour while under his command.† Of his own part in conducting the occupation, so hazardous in its nature, to a pacific close, ample recognition was expressed by the pen of Lord Bathurst, which lent itself on this occasion to terms more characteristic of French or Spanish documents than the frigid officialism of English despatches. "Amidst the signal achievements

Evacuation  
of France  
by the  
Allies.

\* Repetition in history is proverbial. The recent action of the present Emperor of Russia by inviting the Powers of Europe to confer on a project of universal disarmament is singularly akin to that of Alexander I., whose project of a Holy Alliance included the settlement of all international disputes by periodical conferences of crowned heads.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 795.

which will carry your name and the glory of the British Empire down to the latest posterity, it will not form the least part of your Grace's renown that you have exercised and concluded a command unexampled in its character with the concurrent voice of approbation from all whom it could concern " \*

## APPENDIX F

*Influence of Wellington on the Character of the British Army*

The close of the Duke's long warfare seems a fitting opportunity to appraise the permanent effect of his command upon the British land forces.

First as to the officers, his early complaints of their inefficiency, their inattention to orders, and their neglect of regimental duties, contrast in a marked degree with what we are accustomed to read at the present day in despatches, but it was inevitable, having regard to the absence of all previous training and the system of appointment and promotion. They were gallant to a fault—*sans peur, mais sans avis*; examples of misconduct in action were as rare among officers as among their men. practically they formed a *quantité négligeable*. It was Wellington's part to instil into regimental officers that sense of duty which appears now inseparable from the profession, to awaken in them pride in knowledge of tactics and acquaintance with interior economy, which, in the early years of the century, were considered creditable only in sergeants. In short, he established, or at least revived, the tradition of proficiency as inseparable from the dignity of a commission.

There were exceptions, of course, to the general level of incompetency which he found prevailing in the service—, young officers like the three Napiers of the Light Division,



Fletcher Jones, and Chapman of the Engineers, Ramsay and Ross of the Artillery, senior officers too, like Hope, Graham, Beresford, Hill and George Murray, gifted staff officers like Waters, Fitzroy Somerset, and Alexander Gordon, whose hearts were in their profession, who looked upon it as something more than a mere mill of brutal discipline for turning yokels into marching machines who cordially welcomed the Duke of York's reforms and ardently longed for more. Sir John Moore had already shown what the British infantry might become fashioning the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Regiments at Shorncliffe into an ideal brigade hereafter to develop into the world famed Light Division. But the average regiment was no better than could be expected from a system which tolerated ignorance and indolence in the officers, while it exacted slavish obedience from the men.

Promo-  
tion.

Wellington accepted, and even approved, the recognised effect of family influence upon promotion, which, in these plainer-spoken days we should stigmatise as jobbery but he claimed vehemently that military character and service should count for something also. For instance, there was a certain Captain Lloyd of the 43rd whose promotion he frequently urged on the Horse Guards, speaking "both as a general officer and on the part of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland," but his recommendation was persistently neglected.

It would be desirable, certainly " he wrote to the Military Secretary ' that the only claim to promotion should be military merit, but this is a degree of perfection to which the disposal of military patronage has never been, and cannot be, I believe, brought in any military Establishment. The Commander-in-chief must have friends, officers on the staff attached to him, etc., who will press him to promote their friends and relations, all doubtless very meritorious, and no man will at all times resist these applications, but if there is to be any influence in the disposal of military patronage, in aid of military merit, can there be any in our army so legitimate as that of family connexion, fortune, and influence in the country. I acknowledge therefore,

that I have been astonished at seeing Lloyd, with every claim that an officer can have to promotion, still a captain, and others, connected with the officers of the staff, promoted as soon as their time of service had expired. . . I, who command the largest British army that has been employed against the enemy for many years, and who have upon my hands certainly the most extensive and difficult concern that was ever imposed on any British officer, have not the power of making even a corporal!!! . . . Even admitted that the system of promotion by seniority, exploded in other armies, is the best for that of Great Britain, it would still be an advantage that those who become entitled to it should receive it immediately, and from the hand of the person who is obliged to expose them to danger, to enforce discipline, and to call for their exertions" \*

The allusion to the disuse of promotion by seniority in other armies is not quite clear, seeing that in 1839 the Duke wrote to Lord Hill—

"Seniority regulates the service of all armies This rule is the safeguard of authority against the influence and power of pretensions however founded The enforcement of it is essential to the meritorious officer on service. . . I must say that of all the difficulties with which I had to contend in the Peninsula, the greatest was the advanced rank in the Portuguese service given to our officers, and the relations of command in which they consequently stood towards the officers of the British army." †

It is very remarkable, considering how frequently and bitterly the Duke complained of the average ignorance of officers of the army, that he set no store by professional education. He held the opinion, since so clearly expounded by Guyau,‡ that the object of education is not to fill a head but to form it, conscious, no doubt, that his own professional

\* *Despatches*, vi 305

† *Apsley House MSS*

‡ "Outside the sum total of the narrow and positive science indispensable in practical life, all restricted scientific instruction is sterile"

eminence had been attained, not by means of the instruction he received at school, but by knowledge acquired subsequently by the exercise of a strong will. Probably he would have given assent to Mr Ruskin's doctrine that "the first use of education is to enable us to consult with the wisest and the greatest men on all points of difficulty," but in effect he expressed himself more simply that the best education for the military and all other professions was the common education of the country" \*.

The  
Duke's  
personal  
influence.

A volume might be filled with wise maxims gathered from the Duke's letters of advice, remonstrance, or censure addressed to officers under his command. Let a single instance suffice, remembering that, although the Duke never was what could be termed a popular commanding officer men of all ranks had such perfect confidence in his experience and judgment that every word he wrote or spoke was laid to heart and quoted from lip to lip. When Marshal Beresford complained to him more bitterly than usual about an officer under his command who was in the habit of sending home false and injurious reports, Wellington replied, "There is only one line to be adopted in opposition to all trick, that is, the steady straight line of duty tempered by forbearance, lenity and good nature." †

Sometimes, in his later years, the Duke's injunctions to his officers were too paternal not to provoke a smile. His counterblast in 1845 though not so prolix, but equally ineffective as that of James VI., became almost equally famous, and for a while tobacco-stoppers, carved in his likeness, became very popular.

\* G.O. No. 377 —The Commander-in-Chief has been informed that the practice of smoking, by the use of pipes, cigars, and cheroots, has become prevalent among the Officers of the Army which is not only in itself a species of intoxication occasioned by the fumes of tobacco but, undoubtedly occasions drinking and

tippling by those who acquire the habit; and he intreats the Officers commanding Regiments to prevent smoking in the Mess Rooms of their several Regiments, and in the adjoining apartments, and to discourage the practice among the Officers of Junior Rank in their Regiments ”

The wits of *Punch* made merry over this, declaring that the officers were in dismay, “dreading the possibility of being thrown upon their conversational resources, which must have a most dreary effect ”

In one respect the Duke's influence upon the habits of officers is open to criticism. When he rose to high command in the army the usual dress of an officer, even when not on duty, was his uniform, as it remains now in Continental armies. The Duke's example, arising out of his personal dislike of display, first set the fashion of “mufti,” or plain clothes. For instance, in 1814, when Louis XVIII. attended the Odéon theatre with the Royal Princes and a brilliant suite, the Duke occupied the box opposite the royal one, and was the only officer in the building not in uniform.

The Duke attached almost higher importance to the non-commissioned officers than to any other rank in the service. Time, and the change which it has wrought in the professional zeal of regimental officers and in the habits of non-commissioned officers, have removed some of the grounds for the Duke's reliance on the inferior ranks, but his opinion is still worth quoting, were it only as a warning against relapse into the old indolent system

Non-com-  
missioned  
officers

“The Guards are superior to the Line, not as being picked men like the French—for Napoleon gave peculiar privileges to his guardsmen and governed the army with them—but from the goodness of the non-commissioned officers. They do, in fact, all that the commissioned officers of the Line are expected to do—and don't do. This must be so as long as the present system lasts—and I am all for it—of having gentlemen for officers, you cannot require them to do many things that should be done

They must not speak to the men, for instance—we should reprimand them if they did, our system in that respect is so very different from the French. Now all that work is done by the non-commissioned officers of the Guards. It is true that they regularly got drunk once a day—by eight in the evening—and go to bed soon after, but then they always take care to do first whatever they were bid. When I had given an officer in the Guards an order, I felt sure of its being executed; but with an officer in the Line, it was, I will venture to say, a hundred to one against its being done at all.” \*

One day the Duke had been quoting the saying of a certain sergeant, and added, “I have served with all nations, and I am convinced that there would be nothing so intelligent, so valuable, as English soldiers of that rank, if you could get them sober *which is impossible.*” †

He was always very anxious to maintain the dignity of the non-commissioned ranks and to preserve the due proportion in their pay to that of the rank and file. Thus in 1812 he wrote earnestly on the subject to Lord Liverpool.

‘The foundation of every system of discipline which has for

*Stanhope, 17* The Duke would have altered his opinion had he lived to see the great change in the habits and attainments of line officers, brought about by the general elevation of the spirit of the service which we owe, in large measure, to the influence of the late Prince Consort. The following instance, described to me by an officer of the regiment who was present, took place some time in the ‘forties, and illustrates the kind of thing which was not at all uncommon. The regiment, a fine one which lost at Waterloo fourteen killed and wounded out of twenty-six officers, was paraded for inspection in the Phoenix Park. After riding down the ranks, the inspecting officer directed the Colonel to put the battalion through some manoeuvres, beginning with a change of front. The Adjutant began giving the necessary words of command, upon which the General, unreasonably exacting, desired that the Colonel should direct the movement himself. Now Colonel ——— knew only one movement, namely how to form square from line or column. Instead, therefore, of changing front, he promptly brought the battalion into square and gave the command for the firing, which, continuing till all the ammunition was expended, effectually silenced the remonstrances of the inspecting officer

† *Salisbury MSS., 1837*

its object the prevention of crimes must be the non-commissioned officers of the army. But I am sorry to say, that notwithstanding the encouragement I have given to this class, they are still as little to be depended on as the private soldiers themselves, and they are just as ready to commit irregularities and outrage. I attribute this circumstance very much to the lowness of their pay in comparison with that of the soldiers. Within my recollection the pay of the soldiers of the army has been increased from sixpence to one shilling per diem, while that of the corporals, which was eightpence, has in the same period been raised only to one shilling and twopence, and that of the sergeants, which was one shilling, has been raised only to one shilling and sixpence . . . Your Lordship will observe that the old proportions have not been preserved, and the non-commissioned officers of the army not only feel no inclination to preserve a distinction between them and the private soldiers, but they feel no desire to incur the responsibility, and take the trouble, and submit to the privations of their situation for so trifling a difference in their pay . . . The remedy for this evil is to increase the pay of the corporals and sergeants, so as at least to restore the old proportions." \*

These representations prevailed in the end, though not until after much resistance on the part of the Treasury had been overcome. It was feared that demands might follow for an increase in the pay of ensigns and lieutenants.

Turning now to the rank and file, Wellington's despatches Rank and file and general orders bear testimony that the difficulty he found in enforcing discipline was second only to that which he encountered in getting officers to learn and attend to their duties. He succeeded in overcoming both difficulties, but the way was hard, and he did not endear himself to soldiers in the process. Vauvenargues, nearly a hundred years before, had cried in the wilderness, "If you would raise the character of men, you must raise them to consciousness of their own prudence and strength," but the lesson had not been laid to heart. Military punishment ran upon a scale of mediæval,

\* *Despatches*, ix 228

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of demoniac ferocity To realise its horrors one has to look up such a case as was sanctioned by a commanding officer of singular mildness and thoughtful nature. Charles Napier commanding the 50th Regiment, writes to his mother in June, 1808—

Corporal  
punish-  
ment.

"You know my antipathy to flogging you know that it is unconquerable. This antipathy gains strength from principle and reason, as I am convinced it could be dispensed with. Still, as other severe punishments do not exist in our army we must use torture in some cases, until a substitute is given by our government. Mark this narrative. A robbery was committed in the regiment, and the thief was discovered in a few hours. I resolved to make a severe example. He was sentenced to nine hundred lashes. Yet there was not one positive proof of the robbery all was presumptive evidence but I charged him with breaches of discipline which could be proved, and my resolve was to punish or not, according to my own judgment, a commanding officer being in truth despotic.

'Two days I took to consider every circumstance, thinking, if he should be afterwards proved innocent, it would be disagreeable to have bestowed nine hundred lashes wrongfully. Yesterday he was flogged in the square. When he had received 200 lashes he was promised pardon if he told where the money was. No! God in heaven was his witness he was innocent. In this manner he went on. I was inexorable, and it is hardly credible that he received 600 lashes, given in the most severe manner praying for death to relieve him. At six hundred lashes he was taken down, with the seemingly brutal intention of flogging him again in a half-healed back the greatest torture possible. Directions were given that he should be kept solitary to lower his spirits. Pain, lowness and the people employed to frighten him succeeded: he confessed all, and told where the money was hid."

'The same author testifies in another place that when he was a subaltern he frequently saw 600 700 800 900 and



means which military law as he found it, gave him to enforce discipline, but his sense of humanity and justice was as strong as his discipline was inflexible. His general orders in the Peninsula abound in instances where a prisoner having been sentenced to death or flogging for desertion, insubordination, or plunder the Commander-in-chief confirms the sentence, but pardons the culprit, either because his regiment has been behaving well in recent operations, or because offences of the kind have lately been rare, or because of some slight irregularity in the proceedings. Plundering of peaceful inhabitants was the one crime he detested and was determined to put down. The country round Copenhagen was devastated by Lord Cathcart's troops, without an effort made to stop it, but in the detachment under Sir Arthur Wellesey when a man of good character in the 43rd stole some cherries off a tree in front of his billet, he was sentenced to receive 25 lashes\*—not worth taking off a fellow's jacket for officers of the old school would have said.

Still, the Duke remained to the last an uncompromising advocate of corporal punishment, he was unable to imagine discipline maintained in a volunteer army without that *ultima ratio*. It seems never to have occurred to him that, while it was a more or less effective deterrent from crime, it was also a deterrent to voluntary enlistment, except by "the scum of the earth." So strongly did he feel on this subject that, when in Opposition in 1833 hearing that Lord Grey's Government were about to propose an alteration in the Mutiny Act, whereby "corporal punishment should be restricted, if not entirely abolished," in the British services, he wrote a very strong memorandum to the King, stating his opinion that no punishment could be substituted for corporal punishment without causing the army at least, to fall into a state of hopeless indiscipline.† Three years later appearing as a witness before the Royal Commission on Military Punishments in 1836 he gave his opinion emphatically that

\* *Life and Opinions*, i. 80

† *Aspley House MSS.*, 1833.

flogging was the only effective deterrent, because, unlike solitary confinement, imprisonment with hard labour, or other punishments which had been introduced during his experience of the army, it was inflicted in public, and every man knew what was before him if he incurred a sentence of corporal punishment.

"I have no idea of any great effect being produced by anything but the fear of immediate corporal punishment. I must say that in hundreds of instances the very threat of the lash has prevented very serious crimes. It is well known that I have hundreds of times prevented the most serious offences by ordering the men to appear in their side arms. When I found any great disorder going on, the first thing I did was to order that all the men must appear, if they appeared in the streets at all, in their side arms, that was the first thing. I then ordered that the rolls should be called every hour, and all these restraints were enforced by the fear of the lash . . . Then, after that, if this did not do, I ordered them all under arms, and kept them standing near their arms. It is well known that I have done that very thing frequently. All these things were ordered to prevent the mischief in the first place, and in the next place, I was quite sure that no man would venture to disobey it, because he knew that if he ventured to disobey it, he would come to corporal punishment.

Advocates  
corporal  
punish-  
ment

Q "Supposing the power of corporal punishment had not been in your hands at that time, could you by any other means have established that discipline in the army ?

A. "No, it is out of the question. . . . Having had this subject in contemplation for six or seven years, I have turned it over in my mind in every possible way, and I declare that I have not an idea of what can be substituted for it

". . . When I marched up to Paris with the Prussian army upon my right, they were obliged to quit the country in which they were living. Both armies were living by requisition, and we went and lived in that same country, because my army was in a state of discipline, and order, and regularity, and obedience, and the Prussian was not.

instrument of carrying into execution a project which will destroy the efficiency of the small army which her Majesty's Government has at its disposition." \*

Towards  
and  
medals.

Closely cognate to the subject of punishment is that of rewards and decoration, and in order to understand the apparent austerity of the Duke in this matter one must bear in mind the altered view in which it has come to be regarded since the days of his service. All honours and orders by the laws of chivalry derived their whole value from the Sovereign—the fountain of honour—and that value was held to depend on their exclusive and select character. War medals, being of the nature of a chivalrous order would have been considered to lose much of their value if they were made common, and in fact no regimental officer who had not commanded a battalion in action, or served within prescribed rank on the staff, was eligible to receive a war medal before the battle of Waterloo. Nay—it was not sufficient to have been in action, as Lord Fitzroy Somerset reminded Lord Beresford in 1833 when he applied for a decoration for some officer. He quoted the instances of Sir Rowland Hill, who commanded a corps d'armée at Busaco of Sir Miles Nightingale's brigade and of the brigade of Guards, all of which troops, though they suffered severely from artillery fire, never actually were exposed to the fire of small arms. Consequently neither Hill nor Nightingale, nor any of their officers, nor those of the Guards, received the Busaco clasp.† After Waterloo the Duke of Wellington recommended that a medal should be granted to all officers and men who had taken part in that great victory,‡ and the Prince Regent directed that such a

\* *Aspley House MSS.*

† Unpublished letter from Lord F. Somerset to Lord Beresford.

‡ "I confess that I do not concur in the limitation of the offer (of the Bath) to field officers. Many captains in the army conducted themselves in a very meritorious manner and deserve it; and I never could see the reason for excluding them either from the order or the medal. I would likely not have to suggest to your Royal Highness the expediency of giving to the non-commissioned officers and soldiers engaged in the battle of Waterloo a medal. I

medal should be struck and distributed\* Every man present at Waterloo was also entitled to reckon two years' additional service towards discharge and pension Strange to say, no such recognition of the long warfare of which Waterloo was but the epilogue was made till 1848, when the Queen presented a medal to those who still survived to claim it, covering the operations in the period from 1793 to 1814. Honours are more lavishly bestowed at the present day, and it would be wrong to interpret the Duke's policy in the regulation of rewards by the sentiment which governs it under a different state of things The chief value of a decoration in A.'s eyes is the fact that it has been conferred on B, C, and D, who, he may feel, are not better entitled to it than himself

As a matter of fact, the Duke never objected, as it has been asserted he did, to a Peninsular medal being granted to all ranks He did object, and felt it necessary to interfere, when the officers of the army petitioned the House of Lords to move the Sovereign to grant them medals, for he considered that an infringement of the royal prerogative; but, as he explained to Lord John Russell, as soon as he was "informed that it was the wish of the Sovereign and her Ministers, I eagerly adopted the plan, and suggested means to facilitate its execution" †

The dress and equipment of the soldier was regulated by the Duke of York and the Horse Guards; Wellington had <sup>Equip-ment and dress</sup> little time to bestow on matters of taste or even of comfort, and he expressed his views very seldom on the subject. Only once, when a change of uniform was contemplated for the cavalry, he wrote home begging that it might be made as different as possible from French uniforms, to avoid awkward

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\* *Suppl Despatches*, xi. 343

† 10th December, 1846 (*Apsley House MSS*)

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\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xi. 343

† 10th December, 1846 (*Aspley House MSS*)



mistakes. It is true that he is credited with having cut off the pigtails of his soldiers when he disembarked in the Mondego in 1808, but he made no remonstrance, apparently against his men being obliged to serve under a southern sun wearing cruel black leather stocks and preposterously high and heavy head-dresses.

Arms.

With regard to improvements in arms the Duke was exceedingly conservative. He regarded Colonel Congreve's invention of rockets with great suspicion, though they had a decided success at Bayonne,\* and he retained an almost superstitious admiration for Brown Bess which might have been shaken had he lived to witness its inferiority before the Russian Minié rifles in the Crimea.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Fitzroy Somerset †*

“Walmer Castle, 9th November 1833.

“I return the books and papers which you sent me and as the Master-General desires to have my opinion, I give it, but I do so with great diffidence, and deference for the superior judgment of others. I have always considered the Alteration of the Armament of the British Infantry, including the Indian Army and scattered as it is, in all parts of the World, as a most serious undertaking. I considered our Arm as the most efficient that had yet been produced. The fire from it undoubtedly is acknowledged to be the most Destructive known. It is durable, it bears all sorts of Ill-usage, is easily repaired and kept in Repair and serviceable and besides its Power as a Missile its length is an advantage in the use of the Bayonet. When I know more of these Details than I do now we had in Store some Hundreds and Thousands of these admirable Arms; and I confess that I always considered undesirable, any alteration of them, much more any change of them for others of different Calibre, Length, etc. in reference to the Expence to be incurred, in Comparison with the advantage to be acquired.

\* It is not generally known that a British rocket battery was engaged in the battle of Leipzig.

† Afterwards Field Marshal Lord Raglan.

so inferior to the French from want of order, although I consider one squadron a match for two French squadrons, that I should not have liked to see four British squadrons opposed to four French, and as the numbers increased, and order of course became more necessary, I was more unwilling to risk our cavalry without having a great superiority of numbers. For this reason I used my cavalry even less than Buonaparte did his, for he gained some of his battles by the use of his cuirassiers as a kind of accelerated infantry, with which, supported by masses of cannon, he was in the habit of seizing important parts in the centre or flanks of his enemy's position, and of occupying such points till his infantry could arrive to relieve them. He tried this manœuvre at the battle of Waterloo, but failed, because we were not to be frightened away; and in fact (we) attacked the cuirassiers, who were in possession of the line of our cannon, with the squares of infantry, and when once we moved them, I poured in our Life Guards, etc. This shows the difference of his principles and mine; but it is to be attributed to his having his cavalry in order. Mine galloped, but could not preserve their order, and therefore I did not use them till our admirable infantry had moved the French cavalry from their ground." \*

cavalry

In all his campaigns except that of Waterloo the Duke was weak in cavalry, and was supposed to be indifferent to that arm. Even in India, where he sometimes had the assistance of large bodies of native horse, they gave him nearly as much trouble as they did service, owing to their want of discipline. British cavalry were trained to execute all their movements at high speed which might be considered a point in superiority to those of other nations, but in fact it was the reverse. It unsteadied the men, especially the supports, the horses, often fed on green forage, got blown, and Wellington frequently complained that officers had such an unconquerable belief in the necessity for charging at full speed that he lost all control over his cavalry after they were employed in a battle. He probably shared Jomini's opinion, that far more is lost by the disarray caused by high speed in a charge than is gained by the additional impetus. "All our movements" he wrote to Lord Combermere in 1816 "are too quick for those of large bodies of cavalry. I wish you would turn your mind to keep the charge, as well as all other movements at the pace at which at least the muddling goes if not the slowest, can keep up" \*.

The Duke favoured Lord William Russell's idea of employing cavalry in single, rather than in double rank. He advocated as the original and ordinary formation, three squadrons in single lines one behind the other at a distance of 400 yards, and in discussing the question with Lord William left an interesting memorandum of his own practice in the use of the mounted arm.

"My practice in regard to cavalry was this: first, to use them upon advanced guards, flanks, etc., as the quickest movers, and to enable me to know and see as much as possible in the shortest space of time; secondly to use them in the momentary pursuit of beaten troops, thirdly to use them in small bodies to attack small bodies of the enemy's cavalry. But I never attacked with them alone, always with infantry and I considered our cavalry

so inferior to the French from want of order, although I consider one squadron a match for two French squadrons, that I should not have liked to see four British squadrons opposed to four French; and, as the numbers increased, and order of course became more necessary, I was more unwilling to risk our cavalry without having a great superiority of numbers. For this reason I used my cavalry even less than Buonaparte did his, for he gained some of his battles by the use of his cuirassiers as a kind of accelerated infantry, with which, supported by masses of cannon, he was in the habit of seizing important parts in the centre or flanks of his enemy's position, and of occupying such points till his infantry could arrive to relieve them. He tried this manœuvre at the battle of Waterloo, but failed, because we were not to be frightened away; and in fact (we) attacked the cuirassiers, who were in possession of the line of our cannon, with the squares of infantry; and when once we moved them, I poured in our Life Guards, etc. This shows the difference of his principles and mine; but it was to be attributed to his having his cavalry in order. Mine would gallop, but could not preserve their order, and therefore I could not use them till our admirable infantry had moved the French cavalry from their ground" \*

With regard to the Duke's general practice as a tactician, this has been so closely analysed by many competent authorities as to render superfluous any review of it in this place, so profoundly have the altered conditions of armament, transport, and communication modified all considerations of that nature. Nevertheless, two main objects must always remain of chief importance, and were never absent from the Duke's mind. First, in a campaign, the maintenance of lines of communication; second, in battle, what he expressed in his own words—"The great secret of battle is to have a reserve. I always had, with the infantry sometimes eight or ten deep, and with the cavalry—no end to the reserve" †

\* *Civil Despatches*, III. 353

† *Salisbury MSS*, 1837 Sir Walter Scott has a note to similar effect in his journal—27th April, 1828 "I heard the Duke say to-day that the best troops would run now and then. He thought nothing of men running, he said, provided they came back again. In war he had always his reserves"

## CHAPTER V

### WELLINGTON AS CABINET MINISTER.

1818-1822.

October 1818.	The Duke enters Lord Liverpool's Cabinet State of domestic politics in Great Britain.	August 17	Trial of Queen Caroline. Resignation of Canning
Aug. 16, 1819	The Peterloo riot.	July 17 1821	Coronation of George IV
Jan. 29 1820	Death of George III.		The Duke revisits Waterloo.
February 23	The Cato Street Plot. Proceedings against Queen Caroline	Aug. 12, 1822.	Death of Lord Londonderry (Castlereagh).
June	Popular excitement and mutiny of the Guards.	September 13	The Duke persuades the King to receive Canning to office.
July 5	Bill introduced to divorce the Queen.		

THERE are not wanting those who hold the opinion that had the assassin's bullet cut short the great Duke's career at its zenith, his renown would have suffered no whit in the esteem of later generations but on the contrary would have retained some lustre which became overcast in the murky atmosphere of political life. It may be so. It may be that if, like his great counterpart Nelson, he had been stricken down when scarcely past his prime, and with the first gloss still fresh on his laurels, the story had gained something in dramatic symmetry there had remained more direct suggestion of the heaven-born in the life-work both of England's greatest sailor and her greatest soldier. Wellington's task would have been pronounced *lucra aliquæ rotundæ*.



ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON, ÆTAT CIRCA 51

(From a Painting in the Apsley House Collection)

[vol ii p 140]



But in that case his countrymen would have missed the revelation of a type of character—the noblest form of aristocrat. Hitherto all Wellington's doings had been far from our shores. All men had heard of him, comparatively few had seen him, he was not a familiar figure in festivals, in Parliament, or any public place. When he sheathed his sword at the close of the military occupation of France, he returned home as a soldier, single of purpose, ready to take the field again should the summons come, but with a strong disinclination towards political life.

ANN 1818

"The Duke told me," wrote Lady Salisbury in her journal of 1836, "that when office was first proposed to him by Lord Castlereagh after the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, he had the greatest dislike to accepting it, and the only thing that determined him was the assurance that, if he refused to join, he should weaken the Ministry and become a rallying-point for the disaffected" \*

The world had been so long at war that no man could reckon on the endurance of the measures devised to secure peace, nevertheless, little as he expected or desired it, the Duke of Wellington, in returning to England, was crossing the threshold of a new sphere of energy and influence, and a whole generation was to be born and grown up for whom he should become the embodiment of English political life, to whom he should set the pattern of an English gentleman. "The Duke" *sans phrase*—"the Duke" without territorial designation—came to denote the individual as precisely as did the titles "the King" or "the Speaker."

In all his campaigns, from the time immediately preceding the dethronement of Tipú Sultan in 1798 down to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, Wellington had displayed conspicuous sagacity and adroitness as an administrator, and Lord Liverpool was not slow to perceive how much strength his Cabinet would derive by the addition of a soldier-statesman.

The Duke joins the Cabinet.

\* Salisbury MSS



ÆT 49 of such wide experience. Accordingly, on 23rd October when the Congress was on the eve of completing its labours he wrote to the Duke offering him the post of Master-General of the Ordnance which Lord Mulgrave cheerfully and handsomely consented to vacate for his acceptance, coupled with a seat in the Cabinet. The Duke replied that although he wished, for many reasons, that the arrangement could have been postponed, he would "make no objection to the appointment taking place," inasmuch as the Government attached importance to a prompt settlement. Such a frigid acceptance of Cabinet rank conferred on an individual for the first time must surely be almost unique in the experience of Prime Ministers, but the remarkable sentences which follow have scarcely received the attention they deserve, containing, as they do the key to a good deal which earned for the Duke in after years the displeasure of the Tory party

"I don't doubt that the party of which the present government are the head will give me credit for being sincerely attached to them and their interests, but I hope that, in case any circumstance should occur to remove them from power, they will allow me to consider myself at liberty to take any line I may at the time think proper. The experience which I have acquired during my long service abroad has convinced me that a factious opposition to the government is highly injurious to the interests of the country, and, thinking as I do now I could not become a party to such opposition, and I wish that this may be clearly understood by those persons with whom I am now about to engage as a colleague in government. I can easily conceive that this feeling (if mine may, in the opinion of some, render me less eligible as a colleague, and I beg that, if this should be the case, the offer you have so kindly made to me may be considered as not made, and I can only assure you that you will ever find me equally disposed as you have always found me to render you every service and assistance in my power" \*.

Returning to England shortly before Christmas, the Duke ANN 1818 took up his residence in Apsley House, which he had bought from Lord Wellesley some years previously, and which meantime had undergone, at the hands of the architect Wyatt, a drastic transformation from the original structure of the brothers Adam to the building as it stands at this day. About the bill for the alterations, amounting to £130,000, the Duke observed, "It would have broken any back but mine;" and he seems never to have taken any pride in his palace, nor to have had any of the affection for it which he bore to Strathfieldsaye and Walmer.

British home politics, when the Duke returned to take State of Great Britain in 1818 active part in them, were passing through an ominous phase. As long as the war lasted, employment was plentiful and prices ruled high, the national spirit rose nobly to the occasion, and Ministers received almost uniformly admirable support from the country. Not the less surely, however, though silently, the revolutionary leaven had been spreading through the lower ranks, and assuredly there was plenty of material to feed it. The brutality of the military scale of punishment has been commented on elsewhere in these pages, a more certain source of danger was the severity of the criminal code. Horse and sheep-stealing, the theft of the value of five shillings from a shop or of forty shillings from a dwelling house, were capital offences; prisoners charged with these, or with any one of other two hundred offences, were not permitted to be heard in defence through counsel, and the horrors inseparable from detention in prison or hard labour in the hulks rendered transportation a doom greatly coveted by evil doers.

At the beginning of the war in 1792 the public debt of Great Britain and Ireland stood at £239,650,000, imposing an annual charge of £9,301,000 on Great Britain and £131,000 on Ireland, at its close in 1815 it had swollen to the unparalleled sum of £861,000,000, without reckoning terminable annuities, and the yearly burden to £32,645,618, or, if the

Ar 49 and prohibit assemblies were carried through Parliament against vehement opposition, even the Cambridge Union—the undergraduates debating society—was suppressed by the edict of the Vice Chancellor. For the first and perhaps for the last time in history the Government armed themselves with powers to rule Great Britain more forcible than those they wielded in Ireland under the *Insurrection and Peace Preservation Acts*. Upon no Minister did the odium of these proceedings fall with so much weight as on Lord Castlereagh, the leader of the House of Commons, his long and meritorious public service was unjustly requited by an opprobrium which darkened his later years, and finally helped to drive him out of existence. By the commencement of 1818 matters had begun to mend. True, the Government had failed in nearly all the prosecutions under the new Acts the amelioration was due, not to the suspension of the constitution, but, in spite of it, to a fall in the price of food stuffs and to a marked revival in trade. To these, also, must be attributed as well as to the restricted nature of the electorate, the comparative immunity with which Lord Liverpool's Government passed the ordeal of a general election at midsummer. They came back to power with a loss of only fourteen seats, representing twenty-eight votes on a division.

In the following year however the distressing conditions returned. Tens of thousands of willing hands were idle and the proverbial mischief was not far to seek. Reform was scarcely considered by members of Parliament as within range of practical politics. Sir Francis Burdett's motion was rejected in a languid House by 153 votes to 58. Yet the Radical party turned to their own purposes the abounding discontent but-of-doors, mass meetings were held in the Midlands and northern counties demanding Reform and the repeal of the Corn Laws. They were the first mutterings of a storm which was to acquire a violence threatening every revered institution in the country. On 16th August 50 000 or 60 000 persons assembled in St. Peter's Field near

Manchester; the Cheshire Yeomanry, two troops of the 15th ANN 1819. Hussars, and two guns were placed at the disposal of the magistrates. When it was judged necessary to disperse the meeting, the yeomanry were ordered to march into the crowd in single file, immediately they were rendered helpless by the pressure, many of them were unhorsed, the senior magistrate called on Colonel l'Estrange with his hussars to save the yeomanry. The order was promptly obeyed the same trumpets which had rung out at Waterloo sounded the charge in this ignoble strife, the crowd were piled and crushed together, many were injured, six persons were killed outright, and the affair, ironically named the battle of Peterloo, took a permanent place in the annals of England.

The Duke seems to have taken little part during his first year of office in directing the policy of the Cabinet. His attention was concentrated on the affairs of his department, in advising Lord Bathurst as to the defences of Canada and other Colonies, in carrying out the reduction of the forces, and in the settlement of numerous claims on the part of his old officers for distinction, promotion, or compensation for loss. Castlereagh, also, continued to take confidential counsel with him respecting the affairs of the Continent, especially what he termed the "most hazardous notion" of the Emperor of Russia of establishing a Conference of the Powers for the settlement of all disputes. Although the odium incurred by the repressive measures framed and carried by the Government in 1819 fell chiefly on Castlereagh, nevertheless that Minister's "Six Acts" had the approval and support, not only of all Ministerialists, but of a large proportion of the Whig opposition, so dire was the apprehension excited by the doings of the Radicals. The Duke urged Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, to carry into execution without delay the new law against unauthorised military training, "Don't let us be reproached again with having omitted to carry into execution the laws"\*. He believed that the country was "not



evening till the Duke came out of the Ordnance Office, followed ANN 1820 him along Pall Mall, intending to stab him in the back as he walked across the Green Park, as was his custom, to Apsley House. Fortunately, Lord Fitzroy Somerset happening to come along, the Duke made him turn, and the two gentlemen proceeded into the park arm-in-arm. The assassin's courage failing him, he gave up the attempt for that time.

The horror inspired by this scheme of massacre, so nearly carried into effect, served to silence criticism on the coercive Acts and to restore Ministers to some degree of popular favour—to what degree was about to be tested, so far as a general election under the franchise of 1688 could be accepted as a test of national sentiment.

The old King died on 29th January, just before the Cato Street conspiracy was disclosed. Under the constitution as it then was, the demise of the monarch involved the dissolution of Parliament, which took place in March. Death of George III

The first matter of moment submitted to the new Parliament was of a nature to bring shame and confusion on the whole nation. Among the earliest duties of the Privy Council on the beginning of a new reign is the re-editing of the prayers for the Sovereign and the Royal Family in the Book of Common Prayer. George IV strictly prohibited any reference to his consort in the prayers, and desired his Ministers to institute immediate proceedings for his divorce. With the first command the Cabinet complied, on the proviso that the second should not be insisted on. This did not suit the King's views at all, he dictated a vigorous remonstrance to the arguments of his Ministers, and gave them to understand privately that unless they went on with the divorce, he would either dismiss them or return to his dominions of Hanover\*. The Cabinet met on Sunday, 13th February, when, after sitting for thirteen hours, Ministers

\* The kingdom of Hanover was an appanage of the crown of Great Britain until 1837, when, the succession being limited to heirs male, it passed to the eldest surviving brother of William IV, the Duke of Cumberland.



ANN 1820

addition of more vehicles The very sentries on Carlton House, the King's residence, presented arms, and the crowds did not disperse till the Queen, alighting at Alderman Wood's house in South Audley Street, appeared on the balcony, and bowed her repeated acknowledgments Lord Sidmouth, driving home from a Cabinet with the Duke of Wellington, could not get into his own house, and the mob broke the carriage windows \*

The popular ferment increased as days went by. There was no police force in London at that time, the Government relied on the Guards for maintaining order, and at this very time one of the battalions of this *corps d'élite* mutinied. This drew from the Duke a memorandum which led to the first steps in forming a regular police for the metropolis, afterwards carried into effect by Sir Robert Peel.

Mutiny  
in the  
Guards

"We know not, and cannot know under existing circumstances, whether seeds of discontent are laid or not in other corps, and the Government depend for their protection against insurrection and revolution, and individuals for their personal safety and property, upon the fidelity of 3,000 Guards, all of the class of the people, and even of the lowest of that class In my opinion the Government ought, without loss of a moment's time, to form either a police in London or a military corps, which should be of a different description from the regular military force, or both." †

The Guards were a privileged corps, but the privileges were confined to the officers. Really, to consider the existing conditions of military service, the heartless system of punishment and low rate of pay, is to be amazed, not that isolated cases of mutiny should have occurred, but that disaffection was not chronic and universal

"I would recommend," continues the Duke, "some new arrangement of the duties. . . Besides the King, who sends his own commands through Bloomfield, there are the following officers

\* *Croker*, i 174† *Civil Despatches*, i 128



Mr. 1. who would call on them and estimate troops - the Secretary of  
State - Commander in Chief, the Officers in Waiting; don't  
think it better but to the two regiments of Horse Guards only.  
The consequence is that when there is a disturbance in the  
evening - they know what to do and off duty all the troops  
are dismissed and the duty is left done after all. Only last night  
after I had received word before with a disturbance for the duties of  
the night, as a disturbance in the night I found that somebody  
had altered what was ordered, and that the guard at the Horse  
Guards was done - I whether for a year or what purpose I cannot  
tell. The sergeants and corporals of the Guards are  
certainly excellent men, and their conduct is exemplary on all  
occasions. But it must be observed that they are taken from the  
ranks, and of the class of the private and had to be influenced  
by the views and sentiments of the private. If the officers of the  
Guards could perform duties required from the officers of the Line  
there is no doubt that the sergeants and corporals of the Guards  
would perform their duty even better than they do now. I  
think therefore that it might be desirable that the duty of the  
officers of the Guards should as far as possible be assimilated to  
that of officers of the Line."

The negotiations broke down after five days' conference. ANN 1820  
 The King yielded to his Ministers so far as to make large concessions from his original demands. The name and rights of a queen were to be conceded to Caroline and formally notified to the Court of the country in which she should reside in future, and she was to receive the thanks of Parliament for acceding to its wishes. But on what seemed the minor point of restoring to the Liturgy the name of "our most gracious Queen Caroline," King George was inflexible. "You might as easily move Carlton House," said Lord Castlereagh when Brougham raised that point.

Pending the negotiations, there had been a suspension of arms on the question in Parliament and the country. On 19th June Ministers made the announcement that the proceedings had ended in failure. In the Commons Wilberforce moved an address to the Queen, in the hope of averting what was rapidly assuming the character and menace of social strife. In the course of the debate it was suggested that, even if the Queen was not mentioned by name in the Liturgy, she might be considered as comprised in the general prayer for the royal family. "If her Majesty," replied Denman in words which echoed the general feeling out-of-doors, "is included in any general prayer, it is in the prayer for all who are desolate and oppressed."

Wilberforce's mediation was ineffective, and the affair continued its squalid course. On 5th July Lord Liverpool introduced a bill "to deprive her Majesty Queen Caroline Amelia Elizabeth of the title, prerogative rights, privileges and exemptions of Queen Consort of this realm, and to dissolve the marriage between his Majesty and the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth," the second reading being fixed for 17th August. The London populace were not the only section of the people infuriated by what they looked on as the King's tyranny. Meetings were held in all parts of the country. The Duke of Wellington, on being taken to task for refusing, as Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, to convene a county meeting,

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regarded as a political move to state that having already per-  
 mitted a petition in the Queen's favor signed by 2000  
 persons in that country he did not see that any good  
 purpose could be served by presenting the same to a  
 committee of the House of Commons. The petition was rejected. In after  
 years it was known that Lord Liverpool was very sorry that he  
 had not taken more notice of the petition of Hampshire  
 signed by the small farmers, generally considered for popular  
 demonstrations which he was at all times too much dis-  
 posed to reject by force. It is not known whether it is quite  
 true.

The scene at Westminster on 17th August, the day fixed  
 for the trial of James and Louisa, was one to test the  
 courage of Ministers, but Lord Liverpool and his colleagues  
 who were there at Westminster have never been suspected of  
 pusillanimity. A vast crowd filled all the approaches to  
 Parliament. Two monuments of Miss Grant's occupied Palace  
 Yard and the Colonnade Grant's were situated in Westminster  
 Hall and a battery of 24 artillery was kept at hand.  
 To kill the common good humor prevailed in the crowd  
 they cheered the Queen and hailed the Duke of Wellington,  
 but no violence of any sort was threatened. The proceedings  
 on the bill were a curious mixture of the judicial and the  
 parliamentary. Evidence was taken both for the prosecution  
 and defence. The verdict was contained in the division on the  
 second reading. This took place early in November when  
 the bill was carried by 123 votes to 90 but even this in-  
 sufficient majority dwindled in the committee stage to one of  
 fifteen only and Ministers discreetly refrained from forcing  
 this most unpopular measure further.

Of the Queen's guilt or innocence of the charges made  
 against her no opinion need be expressed in this place, this  
 only need be said that if they were unfounded, no woman  
 had ever done more to wreck her reputation in contempt of  
 all the observances which ensure and justify respect to rank.  
 Parliament in allowing her as Princess of Wales £35,000

a year, had made ample provision for maintaining her dignity; ANN 1820  
it had been her choice to lead the life of a common tramp

On 23rd November Parliament adjourned for a month; when it reassembled the Ministry had been weakened by the resignation of Canning, who disapproved of the proceedings against the Queen. The popular agitation, however, had greatly subsided, the Queen's conduct having damped the ardour of her warmest supporters. At the conclusion of her trial, she had boldly declared, by Brougham's advice, that she would never consent to receive a subsidy from a Parliament which excluded her name from the Liturgy. Reflection brought a change of mind: she wrote and asked Liverpool for an allowance; an annuity of £50,000 was voted and a residence provided at the public expense, nobody could say that, short of being restored to her full rights as royal consort, she was illiberally treated, and people turned their thoughts to other matters.

It is difficult to gather any evidence as to the feelings of the Duke of Wellington throughout these proceedings, because, being in daily intercourse with his colleagues, very few written communications seem to have passed between them. It is true that he told the King he had nothing to do with the appointment of the Milan Commission, sent out to collect evidence against the Queen, and that he did not know of its existence till long after he had taken office. But he undoubtedly supported the Cabinet throughout their proceedings in relation to the Queen, and imparted confidence to his colleagues in facing the popular tumult, which he despised, and supported them in the loss sustained by the defection of Canning. No man ever carried out more fully than Wellington the precept of "honouring the Crown, though it hangs on a bush," and never, perhaps, was that precept more hardly strained than in regard to George IV. Wellington had received many favours and the highest possible honours from the hands of the King, but there never was trust or affection between them. The King, indeed, relied

The Duke's part in the proceedings.  
178

Ar 31 greatly on the Duke but he feared him, and at times was unable to conceal his dislike. A strong sense of duty attached the Duke to the King's service but his confidential letters are full of expressions showing how little reliance he placed on him.

It is immediately after the breakdown of the proceedings against Queen Caroline that we come on the first evidence of the Duke advising the King independently of his colleagues in the Cabinet. The King furious at the abandonment of the Bill of Pains and Penalties, was inclined to dismiss his Ministers.

"I am very far from wishing" ran this singular letter from the Master of the Ordnance "to persuade your Majesty not to change your government if your Majesty thinks that others can conduct your Majesty's affairs with more advantage. But I entreat your Majesty for the sake of your own honour and, I will add your own independence in relation to their successors, not to deprive your servants of their power till they have concluded the business in which they are engaged." \*

Parliament had adjourned until 23rd December, when the King insisted that it should at once enter upon the question of the Queen's provision and other issues collateral on the abandonment of the Bill of Pains and Penalties. The Duke was urgent for prorogation on 23rd December in order that the bill might expire in the ordinary course, and the remaining matters be discussed without its shadow remaining on the notice paper. In a letter of great length he argued against the prudence of discussing the Queen's affairs while the public mind was still agitated by the provisions of the discredited bill. Then he returned to the King's intention of changing his Ministers.

"No persons could serve your Majesty excepting those now in your service, without dissolving the Parliament and I need not point out the consequence of coming to a discussion of all the

difficult questions relating to a provision for the Queen, and to the Milan Commission, and others collateral to the recent inquiry in the House of Lords, in a Parliament elected during the existence of the present ferment in the public mind. But those to whom your Majesty would naturally look as the successors to, your present servants are, and have long been, their political rivals and opposers, particularly in their recent measures regarding the Queen, and it cannot be expected that they will not take advantage of every circumstance, however trivial, and of every action of every inferior agent, however low and corrupt, of the Milan Commission, to destroy the reputation of their predecessors in office, and, through them, that of your Majesty yourself. . . . It appears to me to be not only the height of impolicy, but the greatest degree of unfairness, to hand these servants over to their rivals and opponents for the trial of their conduct in these transactions." \* ANN 1821

It is not apparent whether Liverpool knew of the Duke's intention to write this letter, probably he did, because it would scarcely have been consistent with Wellington's loyalty to his chief, which was without flaw, that he should address the King behind backs, as it were but it is a sign of the extraordinary ascendancy to which he had attained in home politics *per saltum*, that the King should have yielded to the remonstrance of a subordinate member of the Cabinet, and retained the services of Liverpool, whom, however, he never received into favour again

The Coronation, which George's anxiety to be rid of his Queen had made it inexpedient to hold in the previous year, was celebrated with prodigious splendour on 17th July, 1821,† and here we catch sight for the last time of the unhappy Caroline, presenting herself at the portals of Westminster and turned away amid the jeers of the populace Yes, the jeers, for the people had wearied of her griefs, and were intent on getting the most out of the pageant, so that the organ

\* *Civil Despatches*, i 153

† The sum voted for George IV's coronation was £243,000, a reformed Parliament showed its sense of economy by allowing only £70,000 for Queen Victoria's



At 51 — pealed within the King made his oblation at the altar and received the Sacrament while his Queen was driving sadly home to die. She expired on 7th August while the King was on his way to Ireland. He did not suffer the news of her death to interrupt the uproarious festivities with which he was received in Dublin and in which he took a part more remarkable for energy than dignity.

The Duke  
revivits  
Waterloo.

During this summer the Duke went on a tour of inspection round the fortresses of the Netherlands and afterwards visited Paris where he had an interview with Louis XVIII on the subject of the troubles which King Ferdinand's capricious absolutism had brought upon Spain. Louis considered himself bound to support the Bourbon dynasty in that country, and was eager to invade it but he entertained a vast respect for Wellington and yielded to his persuasion to unite with Great Britain in an attempt at friendly mediation.

Thereafter the Duke met George IV at Brussels, and conducted him over the field of Waterloo. A singular contrast it must have been between these two figures on that historic ground—the florid, still handsome, but bloated and diseased voluptuary and the lean keen-eyed soldier-statesman, one self-styled the English people know with how much justice, the first gentleman in Europe, the other *rainqueur des rainqueurs*—the first soldier in the world.

Movement  
for the  
recall of  
Canning

The Queen having been removed from the scene, the Prime Minister was pressed by members of his Cabinet and others to procure the restoration of Canning to office. Liverpool, though he dreaded his late colleague, yet relied greatly on his ability and put the necessity of strengthening his Cabinet by the re-admission of the only debater who could meet Brougham on equal terms. The King flatly refused to listen to the proposal. He had not forgiven Liverpool for his failure in the matter of the divorce, far more active was his resentment against the Minister who had left his service rather than be party to the proceedings against the Queen. Thereupon Liverpool told the Duke that he intended to resign.

Wellington held Canning in high esteem at this time, and ANN 1821. was fully convinced of the advantage of bringing him back to office, but he did not approve of staking the existence of the Government upon it. He wrote a long letter to his chief, which gives a curious insight into the methods of Georgian government.

"There is no doubt that Mr Canning is not very popular with the party, and although they in general would wish for his assistance, they would be much disappointed and displeased to find the power of the country transferred to the hands of the Whigs and Radicals, because we could not prevail upon the King to re-admit Mr Canning into his Councils . . . Then the question arises, ought you to make it (a threat of resignation) without being determined to carry it through? Your continued opinion, mine, that of several others of your colleagues, and of many of your friends, that it is highly desirable that Mr. Canning should be in the Government, and the claim preferred in the last letter of the 29th of June to bring his name again under the King's view, show that you ought to propose him to the King, not only under present circumstances, but whenever an opportunity may offer, his own conduct and opinions in relation to the Government being the same as they are at present. I would recommend you to propose him to the King, then, not in the spirit of hostility, not as an alternative to be taken between Mr Canning and us, or anything else the King can find as a Government, but as you did at first, as an arrangement calculated for the strength of the Government, the benefit of the country, and the honour of the King himself." \*

The Duke then alluded to the King's desire to appoint Lord Conyngham to high office, the husband of a lady whose relations with the King were a public scandal

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\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 193

Mr 53. you may rely upon it, he will not be allowed to do. If he does, I think the appointment of Lord Conyngham, unaccompanied by a satisfactory arrangement of the question of Mr Canning or of the Government, would give you a good ground for quarrel. But why should we look for a quarrel? Is it not rather our duty to endeavour to settle this petty question, which, after all, is a mere trifle and can [not] affect us, and never was considered as affecting us, except as a point of honour? I don't mean to depreciate the importance of a point of honour to the Government, but, I would observe that the prevention of this particular appointment became a point of honour and importance to the Government, after the rejection of Canning in June, the questions of the Irish peerages and of the green ribbons, and all the follies of the coronation. As I told you at Walmer, the King has never forgiven your opposition to his wishes in the case of Mr Sumner.\* This feeling has influenced every action of his life in relation to his Government from that moment, and I believe to more than one of us he avowed that his objection to Mr Canning was, that his accession to the Government was peculiarly desirable to you. Nothing can be more unjust or more unfair than this feeling, and as there is not one of your colleagues who did not highly approve of what you did respecting Mr Sumner,† so there is not one of them who would not suffer with you all the consequences of that act. It must not be forgotten, however, that we have a duty imposed upon us which was never thrown on any of our predecessors. The question for us is not—whether we shall bear with many inconveniences and evils resulting from the King's habits and character, and which none of our predecessors ever bore, or make way for others equally capable with ourselves of carrying on the public service? but—whether we shall bear all that we have to endure, or give up the government to the Whigs and Radicals, or in other words, the country in all its relations to irretrievable ruin? ‡

Afterwards Bishop of Winchester.

† Lord Liverpool had declined to give advancement in the Church to Mr Sumner, who was tutor in Lord Conyngham's family when Lady Conyngham had asked for it.

‡ *Orill Despatches*, I. 186.

There, in a single sentence, is the key to the whole of the Duke of Wellington's political career, with the exception of a remarkable transaction, presently to be noticed. This was his guiding principle on many subsequent occasions, wherein a lesser man might have been judged as having taken a certain line out of desire for office and power. The fact is that the Duke could never, till his latest breath, view a Whig or Radical Government as consistent with the safety of the throne or the welfare of the country. One may smile at the apprehensions he expressed as to the results of the slightest tampering with the constitution or the increase of popular political power; but light is the task of upholding the throne as we know it compared with that of its defenders under George IV. Had there been no stout hearts and steady heads to stem the tide of change when it seemed about to overwhelm all landmarks, we might now be speculating on the former grandeur of the ruins of that edifice which it is our privilege to beautify and enlarge. Wellington was by no means singular in his dread of democratic change, but he was far more frank about it than others at a time when to be frank required a high degree of courage. The sentiments of Lord Bacon and Thomas Carlyle were equally outspoken on this question, but the first did not risk much when he owned to having a strong dislike for the word "people," nor the second when he made disparaging reference to "the collective wisdom of individual ignorances."

Lord Liverpool yielded to Wellington's advice and continued to conduct the King's Government, till, at the close of the session of 1822, an event occurred which revived the urgency for the return of Canning. The closing days of the session were saddened for the Duke by the alarming condition of his closest friend and most trusted colleague. Throughout the most eventful years of his life, through the shadows of disfavour cast by the Convention of Cintra, through those periods of anxiety when the continued support to the army in the Peninsula was most precarious, Castlereagh's confidence in

ANN 1822

Illness and  
death of  
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— **Æt 53.** Wellington had never wavered, never, under any circumstances had these two men ceased to rely on each other. It would be difficult to say which of them had served the other best—Castlereagh, in supporting Wellington in the field and in the conduct of the war through good report and ill—Wellington, in crowning with success by his splendid generalship the foreign policy of Castlereagh. Without the services of the soldier the statesman must have bowed his neck to Buonaparte—without the friendship of the statesman, the soldier's talents must have been buried with those of Burrard and Dalrymple. This noble fellowship was about to be severed. The strain of anxiety caused by the state of the country after the peace, and by the humiliation brought on the Government by the trial of the Queen, proved more than a mind, sapped by private misery of a peculiarly distressing kind,\* could sustain and, shortly before the prorogation of Parliament the leader of the House of Commons alarmed his friends by symptoms of approaching insanity. On 9th August the Duke of Wellington, then on the point of starting for the Netherlands saw Lord Castlereagh,† who was also on the eve of his departure to take part in the Congress of Vienna. Castlereagh began an extraordinary complaint, that all his friends had conspired against him that somebody had sent his horses up to town that he might fly and that it was necessary for him to fly.

Depend upon it," said the Duke "this is all an illusion. Your stomach is out of order. Ring your bell and ask if your horses are in London, convince yourself."

Castlereagh rang the bell furiously, and shouted at the servant who answered it—

"Who dared to order my horses up to town?"

"They are not in town, my lord," replied the man, "they have not been ordered."

\* It is known that Lord Castlereagh fell into a nefarious stratagem, which exposed him to a peculiarly cruel system of blackmail.

† I retain the title by which he is best known in history, though he had shortly before succeeded his father as Marquis of Londonderry.

"There," said the Duke, when the man had gone, "you see ANN 1822  
it's as I said," upon which Lord Castlereagh flung a handkerchief over his face, threw himself back on the sofa, and burst into tears \*

"Well," he sobbed, "since *you* say so, it must be so."

The Duke then offered to put off his journey to the Netherlands in order to stay with him, but Castlereagh would not hear of it; so on leaving the Duke wrote an urgent note to Dr Bankhead, requesting him to see Lord Castlereagh at once. The doctor called that night, and let blood according to the approved practice of the day. The patient's razors and every dangerous instrument were carefully removed, but there was a knife in one of his despatch-boxes, with which, on 12th August, he put an end to his life.

Thus ended one of Wellington's few intimate friendships, one which was never overcast by coldness save once. This was caused by the evil influence of Lord Castlereagh's brother, Lord Stewart,† whose intrigues against his chief in the Peninsula have been briefly referred to in the account of General Craufurd's death‡. It was on one of the numerous occasions on which Lord Liverpool threatened to resign, Castlereagh naturally expected to succeed him as Prime Minister, but his brother insinuated to him that the Duke of Wellington intended to become head of the Government. Thereupon, and for some time after, Castlereagh treated the Duke with marked coolness, till one evening, when they were driving down together to dine with Sir William Curtis at his villa, the Duke spoke with so much frankness and cordiality of the affairs of the approaching Congress of Vienna, that Castlereagh told him of the attempt that had been made to

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† Succeeded as third marquess on his brother's death, having been previously raised to the peerage as Baron Stewart in 1814.

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Æt 63 — set them at variance, and that nothing should ever shake his confidence in his friend again \* For Castlereagh's public and private character Wellington retained to the last the highest esteem. "He possessed a clear mind, the highest talents and the most steady principle—more so than any body I ever knew. He could do everything but speak in Parliament, *that he could not do* †

On Castlereagh's death the Duke of Wellington received the King's commands to attend the Congress of Vienna in his place, but his departure was delayed by a sharp attack of illness. In the mean time the vacancy in the Cabinet and at the Foreign Office had to be filled, and there were but two men between whom the choice of Lord Liverpool must lie—Peel and Canning. The state of Peel's health made it doubtful if he were equal to the labours of such an important department conjoined with those of leading the House of Commons. Besides, he could not talk French, and was wholly unaccustomed to foreign affairs. The King's displeasure with Liverpool rendered that Minister the worst advocate of Canning's claims upon Wellington therefore, was laid the task of overcoming his Majesty's resistance. Canning, meanwhile, had accepted the appointment of Governor-General of India, and the King wrote from Scotland declaring that his decision was "final and unalterable," that to India he should go. Undaunted by this the Duke, though confined to bed by illness addressed his Majesty immediately upon his return to London.

The Duke prevails on the King to give office to Canning

*Salisbury MSS.*, where illustrations abound of the manner in which the third marquise acted so as to forfeit the Duke's confidence. At the first Congress of Vienna, Lord Londonderry (then Lord Stewart), who was serving under the Duke, wrote home despatches constantly criticising and reflecting on the proceedings, without showing them to his chief who only discovered it when, on arriving to command the army in Flanders, he received duplicates of these very papers among the despatches which came from Vienna, which Lord Castlereagh had desired him to open. He did the same thing at the Congress of Verona; and Canning, who received the despatches, gave information of it to the Duke. Metternich put the Duke on his guard against Stewart, saying, "*C'est la plus mauvaise pièce que vous avez.*"

† *Salisbury MSS.*

*The King to Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington.*

ANN 1822

"Carlton House, 5th September, 1822

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was very glad to learn by the *friend* whom I sent to your bedside yesterday that you were rather better, and I hope that I shall have your further amendment confirmed by him to-day.

"He gave me a most faithful and detailed account of your opinion and kind feelings under the painful embarrassment in which we are at present placed, and I must confess that it has produced a stronger conviction on my mind than anything that had previously been urged by others. If I could get over that which is so *intimately connected with my private honour*, all might be well, but how, my friend, is that to be effected? I have a perfect reliance in your dutiful affection towards me as your Sovereign, I have the most unbounded confidence in your sentiments of regard towards me as your friend, my reliance therefore on you is complete.

"I am, with great truth,

"Your affectionate

"G R."

"Carlton House, 7th September, 1822

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—If you are quite well enough to come out to-day, of course I shall be most anxious to see you, but let me desire of you in the strongest manner not to leave your room at any hazard

"I have written to Lord Liverpool to say that I shall defer my interview with him until I shall have had the pleasure of seeing you. My friend, whom I again send with this, will receive from you, in the interim, any new sentiments or opinions that further reflection may have induced you to form on the painful subject under consideration. I am most sensibly impressed with your dutiful and affectionate attention to my interests and happiness.

"Believe me, with great truth,

"Your affectionate

"G R."

Wellington, being still confined to his room, wrote a long and clear letter, acknowledging that it had been "with pain

Æt 53 — and difficulty" that he had brought himself to recommend the recall of Canning to office, knowing as he did the King's reasons for objecting to it but expressing his conviction that there was no other arrangement which would enable the Cabinet to face another session

"The honour of your Majesty consists in acts of mercy and grace, and I am convinced that your Majesty's honour is most safe in extending your grace and favour to Mr Canning. I really believe, as I have before told your Majesty, that Mr Canning never intended to do anything displeasing to your Majesty and I feel assured that he would be too happy to explain any part of his conduct which might have had that effect. But I confess that I doubt that any explanation would be satisfactory to your Majesty and I am quite certain that the call for it, or even the admission of it, would not be so consistent with your Majesty's dignity, and would not give such cause to your Majesty's mind, as the act of royal grace which I have taken the liberty of suggesting." \*

Canning  
and Peel  
join the  
Cabinet.

Lord Eldon was bitterly opposed to the restoration of Mr Canning, but the Duke had the last word with the King, and it prevailed. Canning took the seals of the Foreign Office and the post of leader of the House of Commons, while Lord Sidmouth made way for Peel at the Home Office, retaining his seat in the Cabinet without a department.

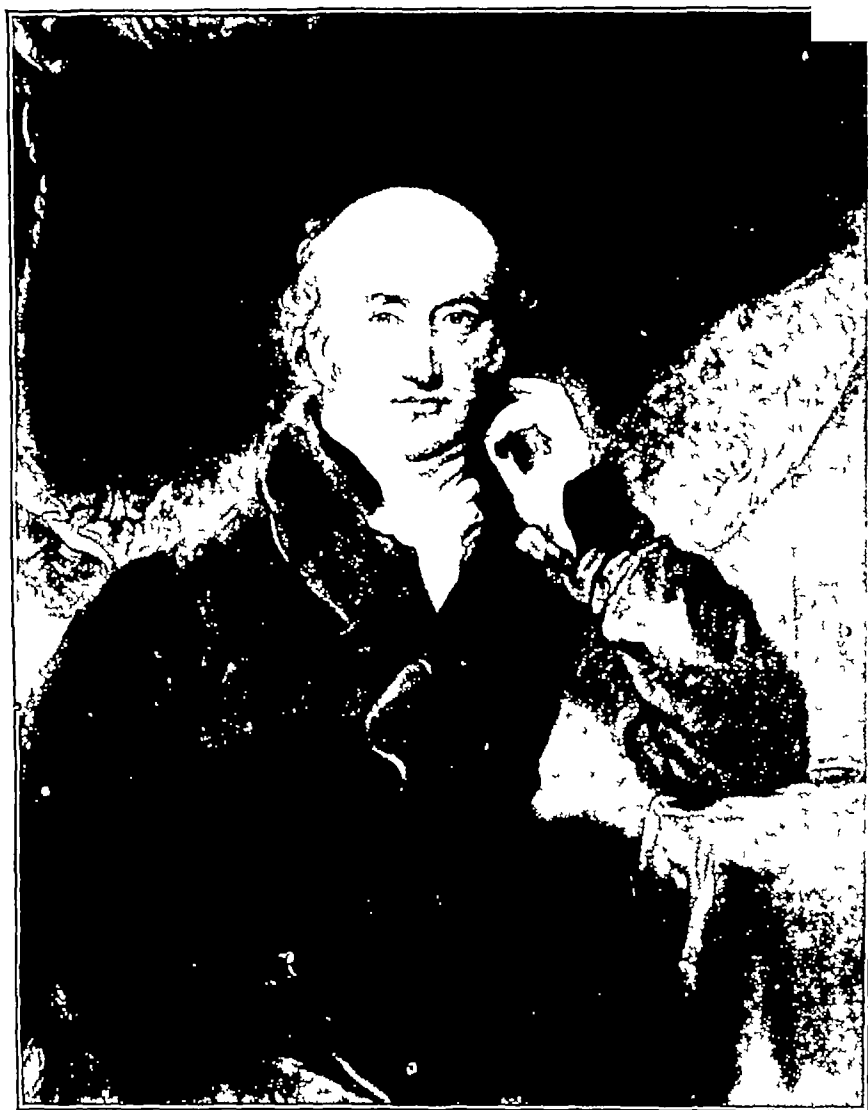
*The King to Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington.*

"Carlton House, 4 p.m. 13th September 1832.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am glad to find by my friend that you are better to-day, and I hope and trust that the indisposition is nearly over.

"Lord Liverpool has just been with me, and the affair respecting Canning may be considered as concluded. Thus ends the last calamity my reliance is on you, my friend; be watchful, therefore. God bless you.

"Your sincere friend,  
"G. R."



THE RIGHT HON GEORGE CANNING, M P  
(After a Painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence)



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FEUD WITH CANNING

1822-1827

Sept. 1822	The Congress of Vienna	Jan 7, 1827	The Duke of Wellington appointed Commander in-chief
October	The Congress moves to Verona.		Fresh differences in the Cabinet.
	The Duke and the Quaker	February 17	Lord Liverpool struck with apoplexy
1822-3	Good understanding between the Duke and Canning	April 11	The Duke and five others leave the Cabinet
1824	Differences in the Cabinet	„ 12	The Duke resigns command of the army
	Recognition of the Spanish - American revolution	May 2	The Duke defends himself in the House of Lords
1825	The Roman Catholic claims	„ 21	Renewed offer of the command of the army declined.
March . . .	Suppression of the Catholic Association.		Reconstruction of Cabinet under Canning
	The Duke of Wellington's scheme of Roman Catholic relief		Defeat of Government on the Corn Bill.
	The Duke of York's declaration	August 8	Death of Canning
1826	General Election	„ 13	Lord Goderich becomes Prime Minister
	The Duke loses the hearing of one ear	„ 17	The Duke resumes command of the army
	The Duke's mission to St Petersburg		
December 5	Death of the Duke of York		

THE Duke of Wellington went to the Congress of Vienna (afterwards of Verona) under instructions which Lord Castlereagh had drafted when about to proceed thither himself. <sup>The Congress of Vienna.</sup>



Æt 53. Mr Canning after assuming the seals of the Foreign Office, made it appear as if the policy of his predecessor had been uniform support of absolutism wherever a people was in conflict with its Government, and assumed credit for imparting 'a more liberal spirit into the relations of Great Britain with other nationalities, nevertheless there is not to be found in these instructions any of that blind support of absolutism of which Canning assumed the credit of purging the foreign policy of the Government. Canning, it is true was avowedly anxious to recognise the independence of Greece, Wellington's instructions were not to hinder it but "first to prevent a rupture between Russia and the Porte secondly to soften, as far as possible, the rigour of the war between the Turks and the Greeks thirdly to observe a strict neutrality In regard to Spain, where a democratic constitution had been forced upon King Ferdinand, "there seems nothing to add to or vary in the course of policy hitherto pursued. Solicitude for the safety of the royal family observance of our engagements with Portugal, and a rigid abstinence from any interference in the internal affairs of that country were the principles to be observed by the British plenipotentiary The Duke himself had succeeded when in Paris in the autumn of 1821, in dissuading Louis XVIII from his projected invasion of Spain to prop the failing power of the Bourbon king. As to the recognition of the revolted Spanish colonies as belligerents, that, ran the instructions, may be regarded rather as a matter of time than of principle, and in regard to the revolutions in Italy "we may regard the duty of the British plenipotentiary upon Italian affairs as limited to informing himself of what is going on, and taking care that nothing is done inconsistent with the general system of Europe and the observance of treaties."

The  
Duke's in-  
structions  
as plen-  
potentiary

In short, it would scarcely be possible to frame directions more consistent than these with a policy of non interference, subject to respect for treaty obligations. But the Emperor of Russia, formerly in the van of liberal sentiment, had

greatly modified his views in the seven years since the Convention of Paris. He had ranged himself with the rest of the rulers of Europe in a desire to repress by force the revolutionary current which was surging among all the nations. He told Wellington that he regarded Spain as "the headquarters of revolution and Jacobinism, that the King and royal family were in the utmost danger, and that so long as the revolution in that country should be allowed to continue, every country in Europe, and France in particular, was unsafe,"\* and he protested against Great Britain's policy of non-interference as inconsistent with the safety of society. We have, therefore, the evidence of the Duke's despatches, describing at great length his resistance to the views of the Emperor of Russia, upon principles formulated and laid down by Lord Castlereagh, and showing that the doctrines which Mr Canning's partisans have claimed that he imparted into the foreign policy of Great Britain, were recognised and acted on in large measure before Canning had any hand in it, and that it was Castlereagh and not Canning who inaugurated a system of honourable adherence to treaties, of resolute non-interference with the internal affairs of other countries; and of discouragement of any attempt to stamp out Liberalism in any nation.

In October the scene of the Congress was transferred to Verona. Of this period Mr Gleig tells an amusing incident, no doubt narrated by the Duke himself. When the Congress was on the eve of leaving Vienna, the suppression of the slave trade being one of the chief subjects under deliberation, an eminent Quaker, Mr William Allan, waited on the Duke one morning.

The Duke  
and the  
Quaker.

"Friend," said he, "I must go to Verona."

"Impossible, I'm afraid," replied the Duke. "Have not you seen the order that nobody is to be allowed to enter the town unless he is a member of one of the embassies?"

"Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must enable do so."

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 343

At 51 — "How can I do that? You don't hold any office and I have none to give you"

"Friend," persisted the Quaker "I must go to Verona, and thou must carry me thither"

"Well," returned the amused Duke entering into the spirit of the thing, "if I must I must. If you like to ride as one of my couriers you may do so."

And Mr Allan actually rode into Verona as the Duke's *avant courier* taking advantage of his official position to obtain audience of the Emperors of Russia and Austria and the other dignitaries assembled.

Good  
under-  
standing  
between  
the Duke  
and  
Canning

The negotiations which went on until the end of November, though of much moment to the peace of Europe at that time, entailing a copious correspondence and constant vigilance upon the British plenipotentiary retain little interest for general readers at the present day. Returning by way of Paris, Wellington received Canning's instructions to renew the offer of mediation by Great Britain with the view of averting the invasion of Spain, for which the French Government had been massing troops on the frontier for some time back. Wellington pointed out that the offer had already been rejected at Verona, and advised that it should not be renewed, but Canning was urgent, and the result was that mediation was again declined, and the war went on.

The most important feature in this correspondence is the perfect cordiality and frankness which is apparent on the part of both Ministers. The time had not come, though it was near at hand, when the Duke should imbibe that distrust of his colleagues' sincerity and motives which ultimately wrecked the Ministry. The years of external peace following on Waterloo had begun to tell favourably on the internal resources of Great Britain, notwithstanding the civil disturbances which prevailed at first. The partial repayment of the Austrian loan in 1823 and the redemption of £75 000 000 of 4 per cent. stock, landed Mr Robinson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer with handsome surpluses in his budgets of

that year and the following But towards the close of that ANN 182  
 year the Cabinet, already divided on the Roman Catholic  
 claims for emancipation, showed signs of further cleavage  
 Not only on that, but on other questions, Ministers were  
 ranged practically in opposing camps, and a bitter feeling set Differences  
 in when Mr Canning adopted the practice of seeking support in the  
 from Brougham and the Opposition against his old Tory Cabinet.  
 colleagues. From this period may be traced Wellington's  
 distrust of the Minister and dislike of the man Lord Liver-  
 pool, whose failing health had begun to tell on his powers,  
 listened alternately to each set of counsellors, who were thus  
 brought into direct antagonism.

The first triumph of the Canningite party came at the close Recogni-  
 of 1824, when Canning wished to persuade his colleagues tion of the  
 to announce in the King's speech the recognition of the Spanish-  
 independence of the Spanish-American colonies Canning American  
 gained over Lord Liverpool to his view, and a paper was sent revolution.  
 round the Cabinet on the subject, which produced an earnest  
 remonstrance addressed by the Duke of Wellington to the  
 Prime Minister He reviewed the principles which had  
 hitherto restrained the Government from recognising the  
 revolted colonies of their ally, he entreated him to ascertain  
 the real opinion of his colleagues on the question, believing  
 as he did that all, except one (Canning), were indisposed to  
 the step proposed or indifferent to it, and, lastly, urging that  
 the project was highly distasteful to the King, "you will find  
 it most difficult to obtain his consent to pledge his Govern-  
 ment to any measures for finally separating these States from  
 the mother country."

He concluded by expressing his distress at differing in The Duke  
 opinion from his leader, and offered to resign. offers to  
resign.

"As for my part, I came into the Government to support  
 yourself and the principles on which you had been acting, and  
 for which we had struggled in the field for such a length of time  
 I should wish to go on as I have done, and nothing makes me

Æt 51. — so unhappy as to differ in opinion from you. But as you know, I am not inclined to carry these differences further than necessary. I have advised, and shall invariably advise, his Majesty to follow the advice of his Cabinet. But I can easily conceive that it must be equally irksome to you to have a colleague whose opinion on many subjects is so decidedly different from yours, and I am ready, whenever you wish it, to ask the King's leave to retire from his service." \*

Lord Liverpool begged the Duke not to think of resigning.† When he submitted to the King the proposal about the Spanish Colonies the King asked if the Cabinet were unanimous and, on the state of matters being explained to him expressed a desire to see the Duke of Wellington. The Duke accordingly had an audience at Windsor of which the result may be traced in a communication dated the same day 17th December expressing his Majesty's regret that he must differ with *the majority* of the Cabinet on this subject, but, inasmuch as he always desired to concur with the opinion of his Ministers, he would not oppose the projected measures, provided previous notice were conveyed to his Allies and the King of Spain "in such language and manner as may make the communication as little obnoxious to their feelings as possible."‡ And so the matter passed, but not without significant evidence of the internal relations of the Cabinet especially as between Wellington and Canning. "To do Mr Canning justice," wrote the Duke to the King, "I must say that in the original draft of the Minute laid before your Majesty there was a proposition that the measure should be communicated to your Majesty's Allies, and it was struck out at the desire of Lord Westmorland principally who was anxious to keep the measure secret as long as possible." §

The rift widened, but the cleavage between the old Tories, represented by Eldon, Peel, and Wellington, and the Liberal

\* *Old Despatches*, II. 361.

† *Ibid.*, 380.

‡ *Ibid.*, 380.

§ *Ibid.*, 374.

Tones, headed by Canning, became complicated on the revival ANN 1825 of the Catholic claims for emancipation. On that question, The at least, the Duke's views were more conciliatory than those Roman Catholic of the colleagues most in unison with him on projects of Free claims. Trade and Reform. His long experience abroad had divested • his allegiance to Protestant ascendancy of insular intensity, theological arguments at no time exercised the slightest influence on his opinions, he looked upon Roman Catholic disabilities merely as political safeguards, and, although he had never offered, as Peel did during the first fourteen years of his public life, an active hostility to the Catholic claims, he took part in the resistance to them as long as he considered resistance practicable and consistent with harmony between the two branches of the legislature. He cannot have been ignorant of Pitt's intention to emancipate the Catholics when he effected the Union, an intention frustrated only because of George III's unconquerable resistance; it has been shown that in Wellington's early days in the Irish Parliament he spoke in favour of a limited measure of relief introduced by the Government,\* and it may be assumed that, so far as he had hitherto allowed the question to occupy his thoughts, he shared the views of his brother, Lord Wellesley, whom Lord Liverpool had sent as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland on purpose to propitiate the Catholic party.

It might have been expected that the Duke of Wellington, by birth an Irishman and having held office as Irish Secretary, would have taken a forward part in the consideration of Irish politics, but he never did so willingly until they forced themselves on his attention. It must be confessed that he was destitute of any special love for Ireland as his native country; he never returned there after resigning office as Chief Secretary in 1809, he always spoke of himself as an Englishman, and took a gloomy view of the possibility of reconciling the Irish people to English rule.

• But in 1823 the state of Ireland compelled every one

\* See vol. i. p 7

*Æt* 51 charged with ministerial duties to take up a definite attitude on the future position of Roman Catholics in relation to the constitution. Lord Wellesley's appointment as Lord Lieutenant had given deep offence to the Orangemen, stirring them to feverish activity, and causing formidable riots at Armagh, in Dublin, and elsewhere. The truculence of the Orangemen roused the Catholics to action, under the leadership of Daniel O'Connell the Catholic Association was organised matters became so threatening that the Irish Insurrection Act was renewed, and the Government consented, on Lord Althorpe's motion, to a Commission of Inquiry into the causes which rendered repressive legislation necessary.

The King wrote to Mr Peel, who as Home Secretary was specially charged with the Government of Ireland, pointing out that the action of the Catholic Association was "what may be fairly termed intended rebellion," and complaining that an idea had been permitted to circulate that his Majesty was not unfavourable to Roman Catholic claims.

"It is high time for the King to protect himself against such an impression, and he has no hesitation in declaring that if the present proceedings continue, he will no longer consent to Catholic Emancipation being left as an open question in his Cabinet. This indulgence was originally granted on the ground of political expediency but that expediency dissolves when threatened rebellion calls upon the King for that which the King will never grant. The sentiments of the King upon Catholic Emancipation are those of his revered and excellent father from these sentiments the King never can and never will deviate." \*

Wellington, to whom Peel, by the King's command, first showed this letter made light of the difficulty "

"The King told me that he had given or sent such a letter after it had reached you, but before I had seen it. I told him

that it appeared to me that there never was a moment in which ANN 1825.  
 the Catholic question as a parliamentary question was so little  
 to be apprehended as at present, and that it would be most  
 unfortunate if he were at this moment to involve himself and his  
 authority in it, that his intention not to allow this question any  
 longer to be considered open went to destroy the principle on  
 which the Government was founded, and that I really believed  
 that many of those most opposed to the Catholics considered a  
 Government thus formed better able to defeat the Catholics than  
 if formed exclusively of persons opposed to what was called the  
 Catholic question. I do not think the King intends what his  
 letter states. At all events his intention is founded on a  
 hypothesis, and I am certain that we shall find him very little  
 disposed to carry such an intention into execution." \*

Events, however, soon caused the Duke to alter his mind as to the urgency of the question. Year by year the majorities in favour of Roman Catholic relief had been growing in the House of Commons. The King had allowed his Cabinet to leave it an open question, but his Majesty's uncompromising hostility to concession barred the way to a settlement, and the strange spectacle was renewed each session of Ministers passionately advocating a policy and a measure which their colleagues rose from the same bench to denounce. Even in the Lords the majorities against the motion were dwindling. In 1824, Lord Lansdowne introduced a bill conferring the franchise on English Roman Catholics, a privilege which Irish Catholics already enjoyed, and another to enable Catholics to hold Revenue offices, both of which received the support of five Cabinet Ministers, but were thrown out by the Lords. In Ireland, where the question, of course, was really a burning one, although crime and disturbance had diminished in a remarkable manner, not the less was the situation exceedingly alarming. The whole of the people, except in Protestant Ulster, were banded together in and under the absolute control of the Catholic

The ques-  
 tion  
 becomes  
 urgent

\* *Peel Letters*, i. 350



Fr 23. Association—an organisation which, as the Duke of Wellington perceived had all the attributes of a party protected by a foreign power. Something having to be done to prevent the two parties flying at each other's throats in March 1825 an Act was passed declaring illegal all associations in Ireland constituted for the redress of grievances in Church or State, "renewing their meetings for more than fourteen days or collecting or receiving money." This was ingeniously phrased to deprive the Act of the appearance of being aimed at Roman Catholics alone inasmuch as it brought the Orange Society within its scope—the *single* lay in its application.

Suppression of the  
Catholic  
Association.

In no part of the world are the cycles of political recurrence so clearly marked as in Ireland. As the Land League, suppressed by Mr Gladstone's Government in 1881 rose from its ashes and fulfilled all the purpose of its founders as the National League so the Catholic Association underwent some changes of structure to enable it to pass through the meshes of the Act of 1825.

The  
Duke's  
scheme of  
Catholic  
relief.

King George had recently sanctioned certain concessions to his Roman Catholic subjects in Hanover which probably caused the Duke of Wellington to believe that his Majesty's repugnance to emancipation was evaporating. This conjoined with the obvious peril of the situation in Ireland, and the growing difficulty of resisting the measures laid before Parliament induced him to draw up a scheme of legislation, showing how far he was ready and even anxious to go in 1825. Apparently this document was prepared for the consideration of the Cabinet though perhaps it never came before it. It is of great length and of remarkable ability containing first a review of the whole situation, including the growth in number both of the advocates of complete emancipation and of former opponents who had become indifferent, the inexpediency of endeavouring to maintain resistance in the House of Lords against repeated declarations of opinion by the House of Commons and the wisdom of making concessions not as hitherto in time.

difficulty, but during a period of external peace and internal ANN 1825 tranquillity It goes on to show that the recent suppression of the Roman Catholic Association made it a peculiarly favourable moment to deal with the question, and there follows a complete scheme of relief and religious equality founded on the principle of concurrent endowment As for the charge of inconsistency which would be incurred by a Tory Cabinet undertaking such legislation, the Duke brushed that lightly aside

"I go further, and say that the King's present servants are the men who ought to consider of it, and to decide it as far as circumstances will enable them. . . . If this be true, it is surely more manly and consistent with our duty to our Sovereign and the public so to conduct ourselves as to be able to render most service in the particular crisis of time, than to be looking about to see what imputations can be brought against us of supposed attachment to office, founded upon our continuing to hold our offices after a question has been carried . . . contrary to our opinions, by our own friends in Parliament, and by the influence of those acting in the Cabinet with us I really cannot think we ought to quit the King in such a crisis, or that it can be any satisfaction to our friends the Protestants that the loss of the Roman Catholic question should be attended by the additional misfortune of our retirement from office " \*

Wellington knew the influence he possessed over the King well enough to feel assured that his resistance might be overcome, but there was another member of the royal house, next in succession to the Crown, not to be conciliated so easily The Roman Catholic Relief Bill of 1825 passed the third reading in the Commons on 10th May, it was believed so generally that the Lords would accept it that Peel actually had sent in his resignation, and the Cabinet seemed on the verge of breaking up, when the Duke of York, in presenting a petition against the bill from the Dean and

\* *Civil Despatches*, ii 595

At B  
The Duke  
of York's  
declara-  
tion.

Chapter of Windsor made a declaration of invincible hostility to all concession to Roman Catholics winding up with the terrible words—"These are the principles to which I will adhere and which I will maintain and that up to the latest moment of my existence whatever may be my situation in life, so help me God!"

The effect of this speech from the heir presumptive awakened all the languishing Protestant spirit in the country. It might have proved a hazardous thing for a royal prince to interfere in such a concern but the English people easily condoned the constitutional impropriety in their gratitude for a bold, outspoken sentiment the press rang with applause the Peers for once championed the popular cause against the House of Commons, and the bill was thrown out.

In his memorandum above quoted, the Duke of Wellington had expressed the opinion that it would not be easy to revive public feeling in the country against the Roman Catholic claims and that the majority in their favour would increase in each successive Parliament. The effect of the Duke of York's manifesto caused him to change his opinion—on this point he strongly and repeatedly urged Lord Liverpool to dissolve Parliament at once, and take advantage of the excitement in the country in favour of a policy of no concession, with which though not one which the Cabinet would make a test question the Tory party in general was identified.

General  
Election  
of 1826.

The Duke's advice was not taken the Parliament was allowed to run to its natural conclusion in 1826 when enough effect remained from the Duke of York's speech to return a House of Commons which in the following year rejected, by a majority of four the same bill of relief which their predecessors had passed.

In this year the Duke of Wellington was called on once more to serve on a foreign mission. His health, since he had exchanged service on the field for political life, had been very uncertain he had passed through one attack which, if not cholera, was nearly akin to that complaint his frame, at no

time other than spare, had wasted to a degree which caused ANN 1826  
 anxiety among all his acquaintance. He took pride in never  
 allowing illness to master him, and no doubt, by dint of his  
 strong will, he worked through many attacks which would  
 have disabled less resolute men. But the strongest of us are  
 at the mercy of the frailty of our organs, and the Duke had  
 to sustain a trial this year which endured to the end of his  
 life. One effect of his disturbed health was a troublesome deaf-  
 ness in one ear. Probably in no branch of scientific surgery The Duke's  
 has so little advance been made, even during the present deafness  
 century of rapid enlightenment, as in the treatment of hearing.  
 The Duke had recourse to the best advice, but in vain. At  
 last a specialist persuaded him to submit to the injection into  
 the ear of a strong solution of caustic. The effect was instan-  
 taneous, the sense of hearing was restored with extraordinary  
 acuteness, but violent inflammation set in, and, in the end,  
 the patient became, and remained for ever after, stone deaf  
 of that ear.

Now the reason which induced the Duke to submit to such  
 a hazardous remedy for partial deafness was his haste to  
 render himself fit for a duty which certain events in Europe  
 induced Canning and the King to select him to perform.  
 The Emperor Alexander of Russia died in December,  
 1825. The relations between the courts of St Petersburg  
 and London had been cooling ever since Mr Canning, with  
 his enthusiasm for Greek nationality, had been at the head of  
 the British Foreign Office. At the conference of the Powers  
 held at St Petersburg in 1824, Great Britain had not been  
 represented, and the subsequent reserve of the Russian  
 ambassador at St James on the subject of his master's inten-  
 tions in regard to Greece gave rise to the belief that the  
 Emperor was preparing to go to war with Turkey. On  
 Alexander's death, it was desirable, in the interests of European  
 peace, to ascertain, and, if necessary, to modify, the projects of  
 the new Emperor Nicolas. Accordingly, the King chose the The Duke's  
 Duke of Wellington as "an individual peculiarly acceptable mission to  
 St Peters-  
 burg."

Fr 87 to his Imperial Majesty" \* to convey his condolences and congratulations to the new Emperor. He was charged also with long and detailed instructions from Mr Canning † the chief object of which was to obtain the Emperor's assent to the pacific intervention of Great Britain between Turkey and insurgent Greece and to dissuade him from persevering in his father's plan of European conferences which had proved anything but conducive to international harmony. The correspondence preceding the Duke's appointment throws some light on the relations prevailing between the King, Canning and himself and on the apprehension felt by the King of a rupture between his two Ministers. In a long letter marked somewhat pleonastically, "*Most secret and confidential and for yourself alone*" the King explains how the proposal came to be made to himself by Mr Canning before the Duke was consulted.

"I must in justice to Mr Canning add, that every expression he made use of was in a very friendly and proper tone. *My fear was that you might think that the proposal originated with me and therefore that you might consider it as something in the shape of an official order without any previous private consultation on my part with you my friend as to that which might be agreeable to your feelings* and of which, I do entreat of you to believe that I am wholly and entirely incapable.

"Mr Canning's fear, on the other hand seems to have arisen from *this*—the apprehension that if this proposal was not, in the very first instance, made to you, you might possibly suppose that, from some unjustifiable reason he had overlooked your superior consequence pretensions, and ability and therefore that he might be deemed as guilty of not showing to you all that high consideration and respect which are no more than your due and with which, as well as with private regard for you, he not only expresses himself but appears to be, strongly impressed" ‡

\* *Great Despatches* iii. 81.

† *Ibid.*, 83.

‡ *Ibid.*

Canning wrote to Lord Granville, the British ambassador ANN 1826 at Paris, describing how the Duke received the invitation.

"I have determined to send the Duke of Wellington to Petersburg I proposed it to the King almost as soon as the event was known, but his Majesty doubted—solely, however, on the ground of the Duke's health. I persuaded his Majesty to let me try the question upon the Duke. . . . The Duke not only accepted, but *jumped*, as I foresaw that he would, at the proposal 'Never better in his life,' 'ready to set out in a week,' and the like expressions of alertness, leave no doubt upon my mind that the selection of *another* person would have done his health more prejudice than all the frosts and thaws of the hyperborean regions can do to it . . . I am perfectly satisfied, and so, I believe, is he he with my intentions, and I with his disposition to execute them, not only fairly but strenuously." \*

The Duke wrote briefly to say he was at all times ready to serve the King in any station where he could be useful. To Lord Bathurst he wrote more fully.

"Excepting in the way of conciliation, which is certainly very desirable at the commencement of a new reign, I don't expect to do much good in my mission But I don't see how I, who have always been preaching the doctrine of going wherever we are desired to go, who had consented to go and command in Canada, could decline to accept the offer of this mission." †

The negotiations were entrusted exclusively to the Duke, Lord Strangford, the British ambassador at St Petersburg, being instructed to that effect ‡ In spite of warnings the Duke received at Berlin, where he spent a few days on his journey out, that it was impossible for Russia to avoid going to war, in order to allay the seditious movement in her own army, he found the Emperor Nicolas much disposed to accept the friendly mediation of Great Britain, and willing to avoid

\* Stapleton, 470

† *Civil Despatches*, III 113

‡ *Ibid*, 93

*Æt* 57 — a Turkish war if the Porte could be persuaded to comply with the treaty of Bucharest. After a month spent in constant interviews and negotiations the Duke left St. Petersburg with the conviction that, whatever may have been the intentions of the late Emperor Nicolas had no intention of going to war on behalf of the Greeks, and that if war did break out between Russia and Turkey, it would be solely to enforce the just rights of his empire under treaty. Before leaving he obtained the agreement of the Emperor to a joint protocol, under which Russia and Great Britain were to offer their mediation between Turkey and Greece, on the basis of Greece becoming a Turkish dependency paying a fixed tribute to the Sultan but enjoying freedom of religion and of trade.

Death of  
the Duke  
of York.

On 5th December 1826 the Duke of York died. Of all the sons of George III., he was the only one who had secured in any degree the affection of the public and the esteem of his friends. As a General in the field he had proved an admitted failure, but during his long tenure of office as Commander in chief he had earned the confidence of the army and the character of a good administrator. His interference upon the Roman Catholic question, although not to be defended on constitutional grounds, had undoubtedly won for him a degree of popular favour which he would not have earned by attending more exclusively to the duties of his office.

Some months before the Duke of York's death the King had told the Duke of Wellington that it was his wish that he (Wellington) should become Commander-in-chief in the event of the Duke of York's death, and as neither the Duke of Cambridge nor the Duke of Cumberland could be considered in relation to such an appointment, public opinion universally assigned that post to the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, however, begged the question might not be discussed till it arose for settlement, and he was not at all surprised, upon the Duke of York's death, to find that the King coveted the appointment for himself. Peel wrote in dismay at :

project.\* Liverpool denounced it as "preposterous,"† but ANN 1827  
Wellington merely observed in reply to Peel—

"However extraordinary the arrangement is which you tell me his Majesty has in contemplation, I suspected that something of the kind was in agitation, and I determined to go out of town. . . . I have always considered that the conversation which passed between his Majesty and me, like many others, as so many empty and unmeaning words and phrases, and I consider his Majesty perfectly at liberty to make any arrangement for the command of his army that may be thought proper by his government"‡

Lord Liverpool found little difficulty in convincing the King that the objections to his assuming the office were insuperable, and his Majesty at once conferred it on the Duke of Wellington. In order that the Duke's services might not be lost to the Cabinet, it was arranged that he should retain the civil office of Master of the Ordnance, although drawing the salary of one only of these appointments. Simultaneously with his appointment as Commander-in-chief, the Duke received from the King the colonelcy of the Grenadier Guards.

A very characteristic incident marked the Duke's advent to this new command. Sir Henry Torrens, who, it might be supposed, should have better understood the man with whom, as Military Secretary, he had been in correspondence for so many years, wrote to the Duke enclosing the draft of a general order which he suggested it would be proper to issue on the occasion. It was exceedingly long, containing an elaborate panegyric on the late Duke of York, and bore as little resemblance as possible to any general order that ever appeared above the signature "Wellington." In reply to Sir Henry, the Duke civilly declined to adopt his suggestion—"I dislike to come before the army and the world with this"

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii 531

† *Ibid.*, 535

‡ *Ibid.*, 532.



Æt 57 — as a buffer on the Roman Catholic question, that he persuaded the Prime Minister to retain office at least during another session\*. The immediate difficulty was got over by taking the Government bill for amending the Corn Laws out of the hands of Huskisson who in the ordinary course, would have become responsible for its conduct through the House of Commons and placing it in those of Canning. But Lord Liverpool's troubles had worn him out. On 17th February he had a fit of apoplexy and although he lived for some time longer he never recovered his faculties, and his long service in office was at an end.

Liverpool's  
last  
illness.

The question of course, arose at once, and was eagerly canvassed, Who was to succeed him? Canning's debating powers set him head and shoulders above every ministerialist in either House of Parliament, but Canning had incurred the hostility not only of the country party wherein lay the Tory strength, on account of his henchman Huskisson's declaration on the corn duties, but, by his own intrigues with the Opposition, of those very colleagues who, in 1822, had wrung from the King unwilling consent to his re-entering the Cabinet.†

Canning's position however with the King was very different now to what it had once been. His Majesty's repugnance to the first acts of Canning's foreign policy had given way to a conviction that that policy "had placed this country in a position with respect to Europe in which it had never stood before."‡ And, in proportion as the King had adopted Canning's views on foreign policy his former sentiments of personal resentment and distrust towards the Minister arising out of the old affair of Queen Caroline's trial, had been exchanged for confidence and affection. In

Canning  
regains  
the King's  
favour.

\* Lord Londonderry's memorandum of his audience with the King (*Great Despatches*, III. 633).

† "I took great pains, the Duke told Lady Salisbury "to persuade the King but I did not know Canning then" (*Salisbury MSS* 1835).

‡ Memorandum by Canning of an interview with the King 27th March, 1827 (*Stapleton*, 332).

proportion, also, to this change in relations with Canning, the King's intimacy with the Duke of Wellington had lessened there was a cessation of the frequent conferences which he used to hold with the Duke on foreign affairs as long as "the continental system was in vogue," \* and there is no doubt that the King found intercourse with his Foreign Minister far more easy and agreeable than with his formidable Master of the Ordnance, of whom he always stood in great awe.

Under these circumstances Canning would have been looked on as the natural successor to Lord Liverpool, but for a single consideration. The King could not entertain the idea of appointing at the head of his Government one who did not share his own views on the Roman Catholic claims. After a long interview with his Majesty on 27th March, Mr Canning drew up the following minute —

"FOR THE CABINET—

"That his Majesty is desirous of retaining all his present servants in the stations which they at present fill, placing at their head, in the station vacated by Lord Liverpool, some peer professing opinions upon whom his Majesty's confidential servants may agree, of the same principles as Lord Liverpool." †

This, then, was the understanding on which matters proceeded, and it was natural that the Duke of Wellington should be regarded, and regard himself, as most completely filling the part of a peer "of the same principles as Lord Liverpool." The Duke's subsequent conduct has been attributed, not, it must be confessed, without appearances to justify the inference, to chagrin at being passed over. The real cause, however, lay further below the surface, it was the Duke's indignation at what he considered insincere treatment. His distrust of Canning had deepened, as his correspondence with Liverpool

\* Memorandum by Canning of an interview with Sir W. Knighton, 27th April, 1825 (*Stapleton*, 443)

† *Stapleton*, 586

Æt. 57

"The D of W.," wrote Canning to Lord Liverpool, "will of course complain that despatches are anticipated by the newspapers, but I humbly answer, I cannot help it, until he can contrive to give me the command of wind and waves, or to put down the French telegraph.\* I really do not understand what he would have. Is he contented that the despatches should go to him next in order after the King and yourself? They are ordered so to do, but then you let the F O know where you are—they can therefore judge when they are likely to have the despatches again. There is no such calculation to be made of the D of W's movements; and so far from the despatch being always returned to a day—— But there is no use in discussing these by questions there is something else, though I protest I know not what, at the bottom of the D of W's temper. His extraordinary fretfulness upon this matter, his repeated reference, and those of his *alcantours*, to the approach of critical times, and other language which I know both he and the Chancellor have held very lately about the state of the Government, satisfy me that there is a looking forward to some convulsion in the Government, not wholly unmingled perhaps, with some intention of bringing it on. Be it so. I confess I have no idea how the Government will be carried on in the House of Commons, in the sense in which it has been carried on for the last three years, with the whole patronage of the law, the greater part of the Church, and all the Army in the Chancellor's and the D of W's hands.

"I am aware, too, that the D of W is very angry at my coming here (Paris). Two years ago he interfered with the King to prevent my doing so. But I suppose he felt that after he had himself been here in the interval, and after Westmorland had been preaching here for two months his ultra and philo-Turkish principles, I was not likely to be again so easily turned from my purpose. I am right glad that I came, not only for the immediate and unforeseen advantage of my presence here

avoiding to be made the show in every part of England which I might visit: and I believe it has happened more than once that the runners of the newspapers have made enquiries about me at my house, professing to be the Queen's messengers.

Not the electric telegraph, but the semaphore.

during the discussion with Spain, but because I have been able ANN 1827  
to assure myself, to absolute conviction, that had the Govern-  
ment been rightly understood here in 1822-3, the invasion of  
Spain would never have taken place In this faith I shall  
die " \*

Here were brewing many elements of the storm soon to break Canning carried his principle of non-intervention between rulers and rebellious subjects to a greater extreme than the Tories could sanction The Duke, while he would not raise a finger in support of despotism, could never feel indifferent to the overthrow of authority After all, he had borne a large part in establishing the system of "continental balance" and maintenance of dynasties; and although he had consented at last to the recognition of the revolted colonies of Spain, not the less did he distrust and resist the extension of this precedent to European countries The spectacle of the widening breach between these two strong spirits—Canning and Wellington—is a sorrowful one, all the more because it engendered personal distrust and dislike

It becomes evident from this point how greatly the Duke's habit of command had unfitted him for acting as one of a Cabinet He possessed mental grasp and penetration, almost unerring in matters of his own profession, but far from infallible in his civil capacity As a soldier, he had not been accustomed to have his will disputed, when he came to encounter opposition in the Cabinet to his view of the national policy, he held that view so strongly and clearly that he was unable to subordinate it to that of any other man, except the King or the Prime Minister He owed no submission to any other, the very intensity of his own opinion was inseparable from a certain narrowness, and the opposition he encountered seemed to him to savour, if not of insubordination, at least of hostility Upon colleagues unaccustomed to military obedience the Duke's brusque and peremptory intimation of

The Duke's habits of command.

ÆT 57 — "I need not add how essentially the accomplishment must depend upon your Grace's continuance as a member of the Cabinet.

"Ever my dear Duke of Wellington,

'Your Grace's sincere and faithful servant,

"GEORGE CANNING.

[*"It will be observed that this note did not state of whom it was intended that the proposed administration should be formed although I have since learned that this information was conveyed to my colleagues nor who was to be at the head of the Government nor was I invited as others were, to receive further explanations, nor referred to anybody who could give them, nor indeed, did I consider the invitation that I should belong to the Cabinet to be conveyed in those terms to which I had been accustomed in my constant intercourse with Mr Canning up to that moment nor to have been calculated to induce me to continue in the administration about to be formed."*]

*The Duke of Wellington to the Right Hon. George Canning*

"London, 10th April, 1827

"MY DEAR MR. CANNING —I have received your letter of this evening informing me that the King had desired you to lay before his Majesty a plan of arrangements for the reconstruction of the administration, and that in executing these commands it was your wish to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool's Government had so long acted together

'I anxiously desire to be able to serve his Majesty as I have done hitherto in the Cabinet, with the same colleagues. But before I can give an answer to your obliging proposition, I should wish to know who the person is whom you intend to propose to his Majesty as the head of the Government.

"Ever my dear Mr Canning,

"Yours very sincerely,

"WELLINGTON"

[*"It will be observed that I stated my anxious desire to form part of a Cabinet with the same colleagues but that I postponed to give any answer to Mr Canning's obliging proposition till I*

should know the name of the person intended to be recommended by Mr. Canning to his Majesty as the head of the administration.”] APR 1827. —

*The Right Hon George Canning to the Duke of Wellington* “

“Foreign Office, 11th April, 1827.

“MY DEAR DUKE OF WELLINGTON,—I believed it to be so generally understood that the King usually entrusts the formation of an administration to the individual whom it is his Majesty’s gracious intention to place at the head of it, that it did not occur to me, when I communicated to your Grace yesterday the commands which I had received from his Majesty, to add that, in the present instance, his Majesty does not intend to depart from the usual course of proceeding on such occasions.

“I am sorry to have delayed some hours this answer to your Grace’s letter but from the nature of the subject I did not like to forward it without having previously submitted it (together with your Grace’s letter) to his Majesty

“Ever, my dear Duke of Wellington,

“Your Grace’s sincere and faithful servant,

“GEORGE CANNING”

[“I will only observe here that this answer did not tend to remove the impression which Mr Canning’s first note had made upon my mind, viz that he did not wish that I should belong to his Cabinet”]

*The Duke of Wellington to the Right Hon George Canning*

“London, 11th April, 1827

“MY DEAR MR CANNING,—I have received your letter of this day, and I did not understand the one of yesterday evening as you have now explained it to me I understood from yourself that you had in contemplation another arrangement,\* and I do not believe that the practice to which you refer has been so invariable as to enable me to affix a meaning to your letter which

\* The advance of Mr Robinson with a peerage to the head of the Government.

ÆT 37 — its words did not, in my opinion, convey I trust that you will have experienced no inconvenience from the delay of this answer, which, I assure you, has been occasioned by my desire to discover a mode by which I could continue united with my recent colleagues.

"I sincerely wish that I could bring my mind to the conviction that, with the best intentions on your part, your Government could be conducted practically on the principles of that of Lord Liverpool that it would be generally so considered, or that it could be adequate to meet our difficulties in a manner satisfactory to the King and conducive to the interests of the country

"As, however, I am convinced that these principles must be abandoned eventually, that all our measures would be viewed with suspicion by the usual supporters of the Government, that I could do no good in the Cabinet, and that I should at last be obliged to separate myself from it at a moment at which such separation would be more inconvenient to the King's service than it can be at present, I must beg you to request his Majesty to excuse me from belonging to his councils.

"Ever yours, my dear Mr Canning, most sincerely

"WELLINGTON" \*

The Duke  
leaves the  
Cabinet.

Now there is nothing surprising in this correspondence, nor in the first result thereof—the resignation of the Duke of Wellington, followed by that of Eldon, Bathurst, Melville, Westmorland, Bexley† and Peel. It was only natural that the section of the Cabinet opposed to the Roman Catholic claims should refuse to serve under a Prime Minister who was their most eloquent and industrious advocate, but one is puzzled to detect in Canning's letters above quoted cause for the deep personal offence which the Duke received from them. Far more bewildering was his next act. On the day following the resignation of his seat in the Cabinet, the Duke wrote to the King resigning the offices of Master-General of the Ordnance and Commander-in-chief, in consequence, as he

And re-  
signs com-  
mand of  
the army

\* *Civil Despatches*, Hl. 636.

† Lord Bexley afterwards withdrew his resignation.

said, of ceasing to be in the Cabinet, and "adverting to the tenor of the letters which I have received from your Majesty's Minister by your Majesty's command" He persisted in reading "terms of taunt and rebuke" \* into Canning's second letter, and in considering that the rebuke came direct from the King, in which opinion he continued to the end of his days, though it is difficult for the ordinary reader to perceive in the letter anything more than a frigid and business-like civility

"I remained still in the office of Commander-in-chief, which I might have continued to hold, whatever might be the difference of my political opinions with his Majesty's Minister. But in addition to political differences, the tone and temper of Mr Canning's letters, and of that of the 11th particularly (which had been previously submitted to his Majesty, and which, therefore, was a communication from the King), were of a nature to render it impossible for me to retain the command of the army I could not exercise that command with advantage to his Majesty, the Government and the public, or with honour to myself, unless I was respected and treated with that fair confidence by his Majesty and his Minister which I think I deserve, and nobody will consider that I was treated with confidence, respect, or even common civility, by Mr Canning in his last letter" †

It is painful for all who have followed the Duke from height to height, in the course of his long service to his country, to be forced to admit that his action at this juncture was unworthy of himself and inconsistent with the principles he always avowed. He was right in refusing to join Mr Canning's administration, he had earned compliance and forbearance with a policy he could not approve as far as he could do with honour. He expressed this to the King with perfect propriety in his letter of resignation.

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv, 51

† The Duke's memorandum on leaving office (*Civil Despatches*, iii 639).



ET 57

— "To recommend to your Majesty to appoint Mr Canning Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and to entrust to him all the conduct of your Majesty's Government in the House of Commons, is one thing, and to act under him as your Majesty's Minister is another."

But to throw up a command entirely disconnected with party politics was to import into the army that very spirit of party which he had earnestly denounced as its bane, not only at the beginning of the Peninsular war but on many subsequent occasions,† and to land the King suddenly in the acknowledged dilemma of finding a successor to him in the command was to prove unfaithful to his own leading doctrine, that the maintenance of the King's government, military as well as civil, was paramount to all other considerations. It was the act of an angry man, a conclusion which is rather confirmed than dissipated by a passage from a subsequent letter to Mr Canning

"I considered your letters to me, and most particularly the one of the 11th of April in which, be it observed, you state that you had previously submitted it to his Majesty to have placed me in such a relation to his Majesty and towards yourself as his First Minister as to render it impossible for me to continue in my office of Commander-in-chief. I am not in the habit of deciding upon such matters hastily or in anger and the proof of this is that I never had a quarrel with any man in my life."‡

When did an angry man ever admit that he was angry?

The public and the press were unanimous in surprise and disapproval of the Duke's action. Of his friends, Arbuthnot

*Civil Despatches*, iii. 631

† "Easter Day 1838.—At breakfast the Duke was speaking of the shameful use made by the Whigs of patronage in the Army and Navy for political purposes, and the contrast it presented to former practice. George IV., after the war objected to giving a regiment to Sir Ronald Ferguson a violent Whig; but I told him he must, and he did (*Salisbury MSS.*)

‡ *Civil Despatches*, iv. 26.

and others, who desired nothing better than that Canning ANN 1827 should be landed in a difficulty, applauded; but others, whose views were unclouded by party strife, deplored the construction which the newspapers put on the affair

*Viscount Palmerston to the Countess of Jersey.*

"The only thing that I do grieve over is the D of Wellington's abandonment of the army That is a Loss which cannot be supplied, and which seems to me to have been quite unnecessary I wish to God Hamilton Place had not been quite so near Apsley House \* I am quite sure, too, that the Duke himself will repent it always He must know that he is the only man fit for the situation, and when he sees, as he may do some Day, other Things doing which he may disapprove of, he will blame himself for having quitted his Post "†

The press was always on the side of Canning, who, by inclination as well as policy, had always cultivated its support The London papers were unsparing in their imputations on the Duke's motives, insomuch that he, usually loftily indifferent to what was printed about himself, made an elaborate personal explanation in the House of Lords on 2nd May He was especially anxious to remove the impression, which it cannot be doubted was a false one, that he had coveted the first place in the Government for himself At the outset of his speech he committed the indiscretion and, as must be added, the injustice of alleging as his excuse for troubling their lordships, "the manner in which I have been treated by the "corrupt press in the pay of the Government" Now, this was indiscreet, because no public man in this country could affect, even seventy years ago, to be above criticism in the public journals; and it was unjust because, having ceased only within three weeks to be himself a member of the Cabinet, if the newspapers were

\* Apparently alluding to Lord Londonderry's influence.

† Original at Middleton Park.

ÆT 53. corrupt he must be held responsible for the existence of such corruption

The Duke's  
defence in  
the House  
of Lords.

"Do your Lordships suppose that, having raised myself to the highest rank in the profession which I had previously followed from my youth I could be desirous of leaving it in order to seek to be appointed the head of the Government, a situation in which I am sensible that I am not qualified, and to which, moreover, neither his Majesty, nor the right honourable gentleman for any one else wished to see me called? It must be obvious to your Lordships that not being in the habit of addressing your Lordships, I should have been found, besides other disqualifications, incapable of displaying as they ought to be displayed, or of defending the measures of the Government as they ought to be defended in this House. My Lords, I should have been worse than mad if I had thought of such a thing."

Renewed  
offer of the  
command  
of the  
army

This speech which the Duke had printed and circulated as a pamphlet was followed by a wordy correspondence with Mr Canning. Sir Herbert Taylor used his good offices, and elicited from the Duke the admission that the only bar to his resuming command of the army was the implied rebuke in Canning's letter of 11th April, and that he was willing to take it again if that rebuke were cancelled or withdrawn. Taylor showed this letter to Canning, who immediately got the King to write the following, without, however laying the Duke's letter before the King —

"St. James Palace, 21st May 1837

"MY DEAR FRIEND — I learn from my government, as well as from other quarters, that you have obligingly expressed your readiness to afford your advice, if required upon any matters of military importance or detail that might occur. These circumstances renew in me those feelings towards you, which God knows (as you must know) I have so long and sincerely felt, and I hope on all occasions proved, at least it was always my intention so to do. I cannot refrain therefore from acquainting you that the

command of *the army* is still open, and if you choose to recall ANN 1827  
that resignation which it grieved me so much to receive, you have  
my *sincere* permission to do so

"Ever your sincere friend,

"G R" •

Unhappily, from not having read the Duke's letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, the King missed the point on which the Duke laid so much stress—the withdrawal of the implied rebuke. It scarcely admits of doubt that Canning designedly suffered the King to remain in ignorance of the true root of the Duke's resentment. He and the Duke were now open enemies, and although Canning certainly desired the Duke's return to the Horse Guards as a strength to the executive, his temper was up, and he was as little disposed to admit himself in the wrong in having caused, as the Duke was to acknowledge his fault having made, the resignation. He was careful, however, to resist the King's revived desire to become Commander-in-chief of his own army.

Permission to resume the command was not what the Duke sought. He desired a complete removal of all shadow of reproach.

"I earnestly hope," he wrote in reply to the King's letter, "that your Majesty will have the goodness to refer to the reasons which I stated to your Majesty on the 12th of April, and more fully to your Majesty's minister on the 6th of May, as having imposed on me the painful necessity of offering to your Majesty my resignation of the command of your Majesty's forces. I humbly entreat your Majesty to bear in mind that those reasons still continue in force, and that were I under such circumstances to recall my resignation, I should by that act admit that I had not been justified in retiring." \*

Canning, having disarmed the Whig opposition, albeit he failed at first in his overtures towards a regular coalition,

Mr 58. succeeded during the Easter holidays in getting together a Ministry. His tenure of the post he had coveted so ardently and so honourably was stormy and brief, its close sudden and tragic. The hardest blow dealt to his administration came, though in a measure inadvertently, by the hand of the Duke. When the Corn Bill, prepared by Lord Liverpool's Cabinet, was in Committee of the House of Commons, the Duke wrote to Mr Huskisson the Minister in charge of the measure, suggesting an amendment to prevent corn being taken out of bond until the price had risen to 70s a quarter. Huskisson objected on the ground that such a provision would enable any owner of foreign corn in a port "to lay a veto upon the sale of all corn warehoused subsequent to his in that port until the price reached 70s." He went on to say that personally he should not object to a proposal that no corn should be allowed to be entered for home consumption till the average price had touched 66s., but he added that such an amendment would probably prove fatal to the bill in the Commons. When the bill came for consideration in the Lords, Wellington moved an amendment in the terms which he believed Huskisson to have approved. Lord Goderich\* declared at once that its acceptance would be fatal to the bill, upon which the Duke produced Huskisson's letter. The effect of this was that four subordinate members of the Government voted for the amendment, the exact majority by which it was carried on a division, and the bill was lost. Canning took his revenge on the Duke and the Peers by declaring in the House of Commons that "he could conceive no species of faction more inexcusable, more blameable, or more wicked than that which would make a subject touching the vital interests, and involving the prosperity of the whole community a ground for exciting party feelings, or exasperating party animosities."

Peel, while giving Canning his support in re-affirming in the Commons the principles of the lost bill warmly defended

Mr Robinson had been raised to the peerage under this title.

Reconstruction  
of the  
Cabinet.

Defeat of  
the Go-  
vernment  
on the  
Corn Bill.

the Duke of Wellington against the charge of factious AND 1827 opposition. Canning's speech was almost his last public utterance. The brilliant, stormy course was nearly run. Parliament was prorogued on 2nd July, on 8th August Death of Canning. George Canning expired in the Duke of Devonshire's house at Chiswick, in the very room where Fox had breathed his last twenty years before.

This event came with startling suddenness on the Ministry and the nation. All eyes turned upon the Duke of Wellington and Mr Peel, one of whom it was thought certain would be called upon to lead the Government. The general opinion inclined to the Duke being the more probable, owing to an incident which took place while Canning was lying in his last illness at Chiswick. It had been intimated to the Duke, then at Strathfieldsaye, that the King felt some surprise that he had never waited on his Majesty since resigning his offices. The Duke, accordingly, interpreting this as a command, rode over to Windsor to pay his respects on Coronation Day. The King received him graciously, although the impression made on the Duke was that his Majesty's "displeasure against those who would not submit to be tricked by his Majesty and Mr Canning last April was as strong as ever, although expressed in moderate terms." \* This visit, in the words of Sir Herbert Taylor, "excited very general hopes and expectations" of the Duke's return to the Horse Guards. This, and a knowledge that Canning's supporters were circulating reports that the Duke had visited the King without invitation, induced the Duke to draw up a fresh memorandum, which he placed in the hands of his brother, Lord Maryborough.

"26th July, 1827

"It is my opinion that Mr Canning is now endeavouring to prevail upon the King to adopt the new arrangement for the command of the army †. . . The adoption of this arrangement

\* *Peel Letters*, ii 5

† That the King should become Commander-in-chief

ÆT 58. will be forced on him, unless I consent to take command of the army unconditionally; that is to say, without an apology from Mr Canning. This I neither can nor will do as long as Mr Canning is the Minister. It matters not to me in what channel the apology comes, provided it is clear and distinct, and so conveyed that it can be communicated to all mankind. It is absolutely necessary that it should be as public as the offence has been, and as my return to office would be." \*

This deplorable wrangle was hushed in the silence of the death-chamber at Chiswick, but the Duke's recent visit to Windsor was not forgotten, and was taken by the Whigs as indicating his Majesty's reconciliation with his old servants. The Tories feared a patch up of the existing Cabinet, and a renewal of the offer of the army to Wellington. Arbuthnot wrote to Peel on 12th August—

The King pretended great misery at not being reconciled to the Duke. The Lady† did the same, and Knighton‡ went further and said it was absolutely necessary to have the Duke to fly to in case of need. This case of need suddenly arrives. They think not of sending to him. They prove that all they wanted was to inveigle and cajole him back to the army for the exclusive purpose of giving strength to Canning. I shall die of despair if he allows himself to be so misused. The truth is the King in his heart hates the Duke and he hates you, and like most kings he will try and surround himself with men of no name or power because with such men he may do whatever he pleases. §

Lord  
Goderich  
becomes  
Prime  
Minister

What Arbuthnot and the Old Tories dreaded was exactly what came to pass. The King laid his commands on Lord Goderich, who placed a list of the new Ministry before his Majesty on 18th August. Two days later the King wrote to

*Civil Despatches*, iv 85.

† Lady Conyngham.

‡ Sir William Knighton, the King's private physician, confidential secretary and keeper of the Privy Purse.

§ *Peel Letters*, II. 4.

the Duke, offering his "dear friend" the command of the ANN 1827. army, Lord Goderich wrote that "from the bottom of his heart" he hoped the Duke would accept the offer. These letters were brought together to the Duke at half-past seven on the morning of the 17th, and, without consulting any one or leaving his bedroom, he wrote his answers at once, accepting the appointment, which, indeed, he had no excuse nor motive for declining, Mr Canning being no longer on the stage. Mr Albuchoth did not die of despair, but he expressed to Mr Peel bitter chagrin at the result.

"I should have been rejoiced if the Duke had felt himself at Liberty to refuse. He had placed himself at the head of the great Tory party in the House of Lords, and in a way that had no connection with his military character. I trust the result for him will not be that he will be taken from his friends and given to his enemies. Should this unfortunately happen, his private happiness will be interfered with, and all those in the House of Lords who revered his great name. will be disappointed and displeased."\*

How imperfectly may a man's warmest friends take forethought for his welfare and renown! The Duke of Wellington was the man in all England for command of the army, had he been reserved for that alone, how peerless had remained the record, its lustre undimmed by those clouds which are never absent from the troubled firmament of party!



## CHAPTER VII

### THE DUKE AS PRIME MINISTER.

1828-1829

Jan 8, 1828.	Resignation of Lord Goderich.			repeal of the disabilities.
9	The King sends for the Duke of Wellington. Repeal of the Tests and Corporations Acts.	February 23.	The Attorney General refuses to draw the Bill	
March	The Corn Duties.	March 4	Interview of Ministers with the King and their resignation.	
May 20	Mr Huskisson resigns. And is followed by four other Ministers. New appointments in the Cabinet.	" 5	The King consents to the Bill proceeding; Ministers resume office.	
	The Clare Election.	" 21	The Duke's deal with Lord Winchelsea.	
August 11	Peel alters his opinion on the Roman Catholic question, but desires to resign office	" 22	Dismissal of the Attorney-General.	
Jan. 12, 1829	Peel agrees to retain office.	" 31	The Relief Bill introduced in the Lords.	
February 1	The King consents to	April 2	The Emancipation Bill in the Lords.	

BEFORE the close of his last session Mr Canning had effected a formal coalition with the Whigs by inducing Lord Lansdowne and Lord Althorpe to join the Administration, but, with a new hand on the reins the team soon became unruly. Early in December Goderich, distracted by the disunion of his Cabinet and embarrassed by the consequences of the battle of Navarino laid his resignation before the King, who accepted it, and sent for Lord Harrowby. That nobleman having declined the task he was invited to undertake, Goderich consented to remain at the head of affairs

Lord Goderich resigns and resumes office

but with Wellington as an unfriendly critic on his flank ANN 1828  
 Among the Duke's papers is a memorandum, comparing Goderich's position with that of Canning. Mistrust he had none of Goderich's sincerity, nor any of the personal dislike which he had borne latterly to Canning on the score of temper, spirit of intrigue, inclination to radical measures and alliances, and "avowed hostility to the landed aristocracy of the country." Not the less did the Duke consider Goderich's Government founded on "false pretences" as surely as that of his greater predecessor.

"There is in the Cabinet avowedly a majority of members of the Roman Catholic opinion, and they tell the King that the Roman Catholic question shall not be carried. How must they avoid it? by an agreement among themselves that it shall not be proposed. Will they proclaim this agreement to Parliament and the public? If they keep it concealed, as they must, they will be acting under a false pretence. Such a Government cannot conciliate the support of the public or of the gentlemen of the country. It must be weak. No man can avow his connection with those who are practising a deceit upon the public or acting upon a false pretence. There will not be against Lord Goderich the same personal objections as against Mr Canning. It is true that he will be supported, for a time at least, by the Radicals here, and applauded by the discontented all over the world, but this will be as the friendly successor, and because he lends himself to keep out of office those who resigned rather than serve with Mr Canning, and whose position and strength in Parliament kept him in check." \*

Goderich did not so lend himself for long. Probably the false position in which he felt himself had as much to do with his final retirement as his inability to reconcile the differences of his motley Ministry. On 8th January, 1828, he renewed his resignation, and the King, on Lord Lyndhurst's advice, sent for the Duke of Wellington, although the formation of

Æt 88. — a purely Whig administration under Lord Lansdowne was thought imminent.\* The Duke found the King at Windsor ill and in bed, wearing a dirty silk jacket and a turban night-cap, but in high good humour "Arthur the Cabinet is defunct!" he cried, and proceeded to give a ludicrous account of the behaviour of his late servants in taking leave of him mimicking the peculiarities of each with much animation.†

The King  
lays com-  
mands on  
Wellington.

On receiving his Majesty's commands the Duke craved leave to consult his friends and at once sent for Mr Peel, who personally was as much disinclined for the task as was the Duke, in view of the difficulties of the situation. The Duke, as he afterwards wrote to the Prince of Orange, felt that he had been summoned to a "most arduous situation and in most critical times a situation for the performance of the duties of which I am not qualified, and they are very disagreeable to me."‡ Peel described himself as obeying, "though not without great reluctance, the summons thus received. I had no desire whatever to resume office and I foresaw great difficulty in the conduct of public affairs, on account of the state of parties and the position of public men in reference to the state of Ireland and the Catholic question."§

Again, in writing to Lord Eldon, Peel said—

"My return to public life has been no source of gratification to me. In common with the Duke of Wellington, hitherto at least I have had nothing to contemplate but painful sacrifices, so far as my private feelings are concerned." |

Men called to mind the Duke's exaggerated declaration in the House of Lords pronounced only nine months previously that he felt his unsuitness for the first post in the Government, and would "be worse than mad if he had thought of such a thing" but the removal of Mr Canning seems to have dissipated the Duke's own scruples upon that score.

The attempt to form a purely Tory administration having

\* *Order* 1.899

† *Halket's Journal*

‡ *Civil Despatches*, iv 235.

§ *Peel Letters*, II. 28.

| *Ibid.*, 84.





been dismissed as impracticable, Peel co-operated with the Duke in obtaining the assistance of the Canningites, and having secured the good-will of Mr Huskisson, succeeded so well that, on 12th January, Wellington wrote to the King as follows —

“London, January 12, 1828

“I now submit for Your Majesty’s most gracious consideration the following arrangement for an Administration in conformity with Your Majesty’s Commands communicated to me on Wednesday last

“Lord Chancellor Lord Lyndhurst.

“President of the Council The Earl Bathurst, K.G.

“First Lord of the Treasury

“Secretaries of State Home Mr. Peel

Colonial Mr. Huskisson.

Foreign The Earl Dudley

“I would humbly submit to Your Majesty that before Your Majesty finally determines upon this last appointment you should wait till we shall have seen the Instructions on the late Affairs in Greece This delay will be creditable to the Gov<sup>t</sup> as well as to Lord Dudley.

“President of the Board of Control Viscount Melville

“Master General of the Ordnance The Earl of Rosslyn

“The Lord Chancellor has according to Your Majesty’s desire seen the Earl of Carlisle to offer him to retain his Seat in Your Majesty’s Councils Lord Carlisle was much flattered by Your Majesty’s most gracious recollection of him, as well as by the mode in which I had executed Your Majesty’s instructions, but he desired to delay to give his Answer till to-morrow From the Lord Chancellor’s report of the Conversation I am apprehensive that he will decline to accept the offer If he should accept I humbly submit to Your Majesty that he should fill the Office of Privy Seal. If not I would humbly submit to Your Majesty that your old Servant the Earl of Westmorland should be appointed to fill this Office.

“I would humbly submit to Your Majesty that Your Majesty would be most graciously pleased to grant a Pension of the

Æt 58. first Class to Lord Bexley, and that His Lordship should be called upon to resign the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and that Mr Herries should be appointed to that office, and that Mr Goldborne should be appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. This arrangement will greatly facilitate Your Majesty's Service.

"Lord Palmerstone to be Secretary at War with a Seat in the Cabinet

"I humbly solicit Your Majesty's Permission to make communications to the persons interested in case these arrangements should obtain Your Majesty's most gracious approbation, and I will submit those which remain for consideration upon another occasion, the various claims upon Your Majesty's favour having rendered it difficult to make them immediately

"All of which is Humbly submitted for Your Majesty's pleasure by Your Majesty's most dutiful and devoted Subject and Servant

"WELLINGTON "

After some changes the list finally stood as follows —

Lord Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst †
Lord President	Earl Bathurst †
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Mr Goulburn
Chancellor of the Duchy	Earl of Aberdeen
Secretaries of State {	Mr Peel
	Earl of Dudley†
	Mr Huskisson †
President Board of Trade	Mr Grant †
Lord Privy Seal	Lord Ellenborough
Secretary of War	Viscount Palmerston †
Master-General of the Ordnance	Lord Beresford
India Board	Viscount Melville
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland	Marquis of Anglesey†

The common object of the Duke and Mr Peel was thus fairly attained of effecting a continuity of the Liverpool policy of

*Apology House MSS.* The Duke's original letter to the King (of which the first page is here given in facsimile) was returned to him on the death of George IV

† Members of the Goderich Administration.

moderation and conciliation. But it was not effected without offence to the Old Tories. The admission of Huskisson, Ellenborough, and Palmerston was almost as distasteful to them as the exclusion of Eldon, Londonderry, Westmorland, and Buckingham.

ANN 1828  
Dissatisfaction of  
the Tories

"It grieves me to think," wrote Lord Sidmouth, "that an opportunity of forming an Administration which would have given entire satisfaction to the country has been lost. The admissions and omissions are deeply to be deplored."

"I sincerely hope," wrote Wellington to the Duke of Newcastle, "that this Ministry, although not exactly in all its parts such as your Grace suggested, will conciliate your confidence, than which nothing will tend more to its stability and efficiency. I assure you that this reunion with the old servants of the Crown in Lord Liverpool's Administration has been made without any sacrifice of principle on either side, on any subject whatever." \*

But the Duke's imperious nature was not well calculated to conciliate critics. At an earlier stage Newcastle had communicated his views on the composition of the new Cabinet, and the Duke had treated them with scant consideration. "I was wrong," he said afterwards to Lord Salisbury on one of the few occasions when he admitted himself to have been in error, "Newcastle addressed me a letter on the subject of forming an administration, and I treated him with contempt. No man likes to be treated with contempt." † Newcastle made response—"Any Ministry which excludes Lord Eldon and includes Mr Huskisson cannot gain my confidence."

To the following letter, Lord Londonderry, the British Ambassador at the Tuileries, replied, expressing his "bitter mortification" that his claim to high office had been overlooked, calling to mind the Peninsular days, and reproaching the Duke with forgetfulness of an old comrade.

\* *Apsley House MSS*

† *Salisbury MSS*



Æt 58.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Marquis of Londonderry*

"London, 21st January 1828.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,—You will have heard that on the dissolution of the late Ministry the King had sent for me to desire me to assist him in forming a new one, and I inclose the arrangement approved by H M., which was finally concluded only last night.

'I hope that this arrangement will conciliate your confidence. It is not exactly the arrangement that you would have wished for perhaps: but we must observe that we cannot form a Ministry as we do a Dinner or a party in the Country—we must look to its Stability, and its capacity to carry on the King's Business in Parli<sup>am</sup>, and to carry with it the respect of the Country and of Ireland and of foreign Nations.

'Yours most sincerely and affec<sup>t</sup>

"W."\*

Lord Hill  
appointed  
Com-  
mander-in-  
chief

Curiously enough it seems never to have occurred to the Duke that his position as Prime Minister was inconsistent with the retention of that of Commander-in-chief. When Peel and others made this clear to him, he recommended the King to appoint Daddy Hill in writing to whom the Duke said—

"I certainly did not contemplate this necessity as being paramount when I undertook for his Majesty the service of forming his Government, and it is useless to regret that I did not make the retention of my office a condition without which I would not serve his Majesty as he desired I should."†

It is certainly remarkable that the Duke, with his experience of civil and military business, should have thought it possible for one human being to discharge effectively the duties of both offices. Before he had been Prime Minister many months he was writing to Lord Camden—"If I could do in twenty four hours the business that could be done by

another man in seventy-two hours, I should not have time to do 1828.  
do all that is required of me" \*

Huskisson's re-election at Liverpool gave rise to an incident ominous for the harmony of the Cabinet. He was reported as having explained his adhesion to the new Government by stating that the Duke of Wellington had given him "positive and special pledges that a particular line of policy should be followed, and that his Grace should tread in all respects in the footsteps of Mr Canning" † Taken to task for this by Lord Eldon in the House of Lords, the Duke repudiated the statement attributed to his colleague

"If my right honourable friend had entered into any such corrupt bargain as he was represented to describe, he would have tarnished his own fame as much as I should have disgraced mine. No guarantee was required, and none was given on my part "

Huskisson afterwards explained to the House of Commons that he had been misunderstood, that the only guarantee he had sought and found was in the composition of the Cabinet itself. Not the less surely had the root of fresh bitterness been planted, nor was it long in bearing fruit

However, before any outward severance took place, the Government had to deal with two important questions Disabilities of Dissenters. Under the law as it stood, all persons, before taking any office, civil or military, under the Crown, were required to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England, whereby not only Dissenters, but members of the Established Church of Scotland were technically excluded from the public services. Although, this notwithstanding, many Dissenters and Presbyterians actually did hold such offices, they did so in virtue of the annual passage of an Indemnity Act, not inaptly described by Lord John Russell as one "passed yearly to forgive good men for doing good service to their country" Nevertheless,

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 487

† *Annual Register*, 1828

At 58. the system worked smoothly enough and Dissenters submitted to the Test and Corporation Acts the more willingly because they foresaw in their repeal a precedent for concession to the Roman Catholics. The question, however having been raised in Parliament in 1827 Lord John Russell took it up in 1828 and his motion was carried against Ministers, although most of them abstained from voting, by a majority of 44. The Government had to choose between resigning office and bringing in a bill to give effect to the resolution of the House of Commons. They adopted the simpler alternative. When Lord Eldon sought to amend the bill in the Lords by inserting a provision requiring every person accepting office to declare himself a Protestant, the Duke of Wellington withstood the amendment, using the memorable words—

"There is no person in this House whose feelings and sentiments are more decided than mine are with respect to the Roman Catholic claims, and I must say that until I see a great change in that question, I must oppose it. But no man, on the other hand, is more determined than I am to give his vote against any proposition, which, like the present, appears to have for its object a fresh enactment against the Roman Catholics."

The significance of the last part of this quotation is clear enough the Duke would not hear of anything to preclude Roman Catholics holding commissions in the army his experience was there to prove that they were as loyal and true as officers of any other persuasion. But the expressions in the first part were affected by that exaggeration to which persons not eminent in public speaking are prone. The Duke's memorandum on the Roman Catholic claims drawn up in 1825 was in existence to prove how far he was in advance of some of his colleagues in readiness for concession. His speech conveyed far more than it must be believed he intended 'it allayed the suspicions of the anti-Catholics at the time twelve months later it embittered their resentment at having been hoodwinked, as they considered, by the Duke.

For good or for ill—for ill as the Tory party long believed, ANN 1828.  
 for good as the strictest Conservative is now constrained to  
 admit—the first step had been taken in the long march of  
 reform. The monopoly of the Church of England had been in-  
 fringed upon, the advanced guard of more formidable invasion.  
 In 1827 the House of Commons had thrown out by a majority  
 of four the bill for the relief of Roman Catholics, in the teeth  
 of Canning's eloquent advocacy; on 12th May, 1828, the  
 same House affirmed a resolution in their favour by a majority  
 of six. Three Cabinet Ministers voted Aye and three voted  
 No, and Peel, feeling it impossible to continue leader of the  
 House in which he was in the minority on "the most im-  
 portant of domestic questions," resolved on resignation at an  
 early date.\* Circumstances, however, immediately followed  
 which induced him to stand fast by the Duke's Ministry.  
 The evil of divided counsels had gone far during the few  
 months the Cabinet had been in existence. The Corn Duties The Corn  
Duties  
 had to be dealt with, and the following letter illustrates,  
 perhaps more clearly than anything which has yet been  
 published, how little considerations of revenue actuated the  
 Tory party—how exclusively they were taken up with main-  
 taining wheat at a remunerative price to the home producer.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Westmorland.*

"March 23rd, 1828

"I have had some very disagreeable work with corn, but  
 I hope that we shall bring forth a measure that will answer,  
 though it will not give universal satisfaction, it will be much  
 better than that of last year. The truth is that no measure that  
 can be adopted will insure a high price of corn. If the measure  
 adopted were a positive prohibition, whether by duty or otherwise,  
 up to a certain high price, such as 70s or 80s, the Govt would  
 be under the necessity of interfering at every moment in order  
 to provide for the supposed wants of the country. I think  
 the proposed measure will give that security for nearly the

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 46

At 53. monopoly of the home market at a reasonable price as will revive a trade in British-grown corn " "

Already before arriving at a common ground of agreement in the duties, the difference had become so acute that Huskisson took his resignation to the King and only withdrew it on hearing at the very time his interview was in progress that Grant had agreed to compromise the dispute. In consequence an Act was passed modifying the corn duties to 20s a quarter when the average price of the quarter went as low as 60s., which landowners then considered the lowest price compatible with the existence of British agriculture.

Corrupt  
boroughs.

The storm was only dispelled in order to reappear in another and wholly unexpected quarter. Liberal as Mr Canning had been in his views on many subjects he was immovable on any proposal for change in the constitution of Parliament, and in 1827 when the flagrant corruption prevalent during the elections for Penryn and East Retford occupied the attention of the House, he firmly opposed the motion for their disfranchisement. An amendment however was carried against him, whereby Penryn should lose its two members. The measure did not reach the House of Lords and was dropped but in 1828 it was introduced again. The Cabinet failed to agree as to the disposal of the seats taken from the peccant boroughs Peel wishing to swamp their corruption by throwing them into the adjacent hundreds, Huskisson having pledged himself to assign additional members to Manchester and Birmingham. The question was left an open one with the result that Huskisson, Palmerston, and Lamb voted against their leader in the House of Commons. Immediately after the division, Huskisson wrote to the Duke

\* *Apology House MSS.*

† It required a pretty strong scandal to disturb the conscience of an unreformed Parliament, and Penryn certainly had managed to supply one. It was proved that the recognised custom was that the two members returned for this village should disburse twenty guineas for every vote given there, so that the elector who voted for both the successful candidates received forty guineas.

to say that he would "lose no time in affording him an ANN 1828 opportunity of placing his office in other hands" \* The Huskisson resigns Duke took Huskisson sharply at his word, and laid the letter before the King, upon which Huskisson wrote to explain that he had not intended to express his own intention of resignation, but merely to put it in the Duke's power to fill his place by making a fresh appointment. Lord Dudley and Lord Palmerston, loyally anxious to avoid a split, tried to convince the Duke that Huskisson had meant only to give him the option of his resignation, but the Duke, weary of perpetual bickerings with his Canningite colleagues, refused to make the slightest overture to retain Huskisson, to whom he wrote in exceedingly cold terms. The only expression in his two letters which could be construed as regretful was one to the effect that the resignation had "surprised him very much, and had given him great concern." † Huskisson's resignation was followed by that of Palmerston, Grant, Dudley, and Lamb. The affair was a blunder from beginning to end, little creditable to the Duke's statecraft. He would have been glad enough to get his colleagues back, but his punctilio, and perhaps a ruffled temper, restrained him from making the first move. "I told Dudley and Palmerston," he said to Croker, at that time Secretary to the Admiralty, "that I had no objection, nay, that I wished, that they and Huskisson could get out of the scrape, but that I begged on my own part to decline taking a roll in the mud with them."

The first thing to do was to replace the retiring Ministers. New appointments to the Ministry Sir Henry Hardinge took Palmerston's place at the War Office, another old war-comrade of the Duke's, Sir George Murray, followed Huskisson at the Colonial Office, Lord Aberdeen became Foreign Secretary instead of Lord Dudley, Lord Francis Leveson-Gower Chief Secretary for Ireland in place of Lamb, a berth greatly desired by J. W. Croker, and Vesey Fitzgerald went to the Board of Trade. Of these men the last-named was least known, yet was he destined by

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv 449

† *Ibid*, 449

Ex 32. — a strange chance to become the most conspicuous figure in the crisis. A wealthy Irish landlord he had always supported the Roman Catholic claims and in vacating his seat for County Clare on taking office, nobody dreamt of any obstacle to his return.

"We are going on very well here" wrote the Duke to his brother Henry, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Cowley and was Minister at Vienna, "the Government is very popular, and indeed there is but little opposition."\*

The Clare  
election.

There ensued a prodigy and a portent. The Duke had no suspicion of the mine that was about to be sprung on his Ministry. Daniel O'Connell, with the whole Catholic Association perfectly organised at his back with dramatic suddenness stepped into the ring as candidate for County Clare. Fitzgerald, after maintaining for some days† a contest which was hopeless from the moment his opponent appeared, throw up the sponge and left the seat in possession of the Roman Catholic champion. O'Connell being debarred on account of his religion from taking the oaths and thereby from taking his seat in the Imperial Parliament the Roman Catholic question at once acquired an urgency which it had never possessed before. The franchise of Ireland was much wider than that of Great Britain. The forty shilling freeholders, admitted by the Act of 1793 practically included the mass of the small tenantry of Ireland, hitherto they had voted with their landlords, but now it was clear that they were at the beck of the priests. What had happened in Clare would be repeated in every county in Ireland except in Ulster. Peel, as Home Secretary was specially concerned, as the Cabinet was constituted in those days, with the affairs of Ireland.

"However men might differ" he wrote, "as to the consequences which ought to follow the event, no one denied its vast

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv 492.

† At that period the polling booths were kept open for fourteen days.

importance It was foreseen by the most intelligent men that the Clare election would be the turning-point in the Catholic question, the point *ubi se via findit in ambas* " \* ANN 1828

Henceforth the Irish constituencies, hitherto returning three, Tories for every Whig member, would send to Parliament nominees of the Catholic Association in the same proportion Disfranchise the forty-shilling freeholder, cried irresponsible Tories, forgetting the impossibility of persuading the House of Commons to such a reactionary course The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Anglesey, was no coward; maimed of a leg at Waterloo, he was not the man to quail in the presence of danger, real or imaginary, yet he wrote to warn the Government that they were on the eve of civil war

"There may be rebellion You may put to death thousands You may suppress it, but it will only be to put off the day of compromise . The present order of things must not, cannot last There are three modes of proceeding 1st That of trying to go on as we have done 2ndly To adjust the question by concession and such guards as may be deemed indispensable 3rdly To put down the Association and to crush the power of the priests

"The 1st I hold to be impossible

"The 2nd is practicable and advisable

"The 3rd is only possible by supposing that you can reconstruct the House of Commons, and to suppose that is to suppose that you can totally alter the feelings of those who send them there I abhor the idea of truckling to the overbearing Catholic demagogues but I do most conscientiously and after the most earnest consideration of the subject, give it as my conviction that the first moment of composure and tranquillity should be seized to signify the intention of adjusting the question " †

This letter was laid before the Cabinet by Peel, and it was determined that the King should see it Peel, a consistent

† Peel's Letters, II 47

† Civil Despatches, IV 521



Æt 59 — a strange chance to become the most conspicuous figure in the crisis. A wealthy Irish landlord, he had always supported the Roman Catholic claims and, in vacating his seat for County Clare on taking office, nobody dreamt of any obstacle to his return.

"We are going on very well here," wrote the Duke to his brother Henry, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Cowley and was Minister at Vienna, "the Government is very popular, and indeed there is but little opposition." \*

The Clare election.

There ensued a prodigy and a portent. The Duke had no suspicion of the mine that was about to be sprung on his Ministry. Daniel O'Connell, with the whole Catholic Association perfectly organised at his back, with dramatic suddenness stepped into the ring as candidate for County Clare. Fitzgerald, after maintaining for some days† a contest which was hopeless from the moment his opponent appeared, threw up the sponge and left the seat in possession of the Roman Catholic champion. O'Connell being debarred on account of his religion from taking the oaths, and thereby from taking his seat in the Imperial Parliament the Roman Catholic question at once acquired an urgency which it had never possessed before. The franchise of Ireland was much wider than that of Great Britain. The forty-shilling freeholders, admitted by the Act of 1793 practically included the mass of the small tenantry of Ireland. hitherto they had voted with their landlords but now it was clear that they were at the beck of the priests. What had happened in Clare would be repeated in every county in Ireland except in Ulster. Peel, as Home Secretary was specially concerned, as the Cabinet was constituted in those days with the affairs of Ireland.

"However men might differ" he wrote "as to the consequences which ought to follow the event no one denied its va-

\* *Civil Despatches* i. 422

† At that period the polling booths were kept open for 12 or 14 h.

importance. It was foreseen by the most intelligent men that the 1829 Clare election would be the turning-point in the Catholic question, — the point *ubi se via findit in ambas*” \*

Henceforth the Irish constituencies, hitherto returning three Tories for every Whig member, would send to Parliament nominees of the Catholic Association in the same proportion. Disfranchise the forty-shilling freeholder, cried irresponsible Tories, forgetting the impossibility of persuading the House of Commons to such a reactionary course. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Anglesey, was no coward, master of a leg at Waterloo, he was not the man to quail in the presence of danger, real or imaginary, yet he wrote to warn the Government that they were on the eve of civil war.

“There may be rebellion. You may put to death thousands. You may suppress it, but it will only be to put off the day of compromise . . . The present order of things must not, cannot last. There are three modes of proceeding. 1st. That of trying to go on as we have done. 2ndly. To adjust the question by concession and such guards as may be deemed indispensable. 3rdly. To put down the Association and to crush the power of the priests.

“The 1st I hold to be impossible

“The 2nd is practicable and advisable

“The 3rd is only possible by supposing that you can reconstruct the House of Commons, and to suppose that is to suppose that you can totally alter the feelings of those who send them there. I abhor the idea of trucking to the overbearing Catholic demagogues. but I do most conscientiously and after the most earnest consideration of the subject, give it as my conviction that the first moment of composure and tranquillity should be seized to signify the intention of adjusting the question.” †

This letter was laid before the Cabinet by Peel, and it was determined that the King should see it. Peel, a consistent

\* Peel Letters, II. 47

† Civil Despatches, II. 521

Æt 59

opponent of Roman Catholic claims, announced his opinion to the Duke that the time was come when the question must be taken up and settled by concession, but he added that in view of his past record, his was not the hand to conduct such a measure through the House of Commons. He volunteered his retirement from office, promising his hearty support to "a measure of ample concession and relief" and enclosing the draft of what he considered such a measure should be. Simultaneously with this declaration, which was dated 11th August Mr Dawson, member for Derry brother in law of Mr Peel, one of the staunchest Tories and hitherto most resolute in opposing concession made a speech to his constituents in which he told them his conviction that resistance could be carried no further and that the disabilities must be removed. Wellington, retiring to Cheltenham to drink the waters told Peel that he would be prepared to discuss the situation with him and Lord Lyndhurst in the month of September. That his mind was already made up is clear from the existence not only of a memorandum on the state of Ireland submitted to the King on 1st August \* showing the necessity of measures for the pacification of that country but also of another long memorandum describing the nature of these measures, which although prepared before 7th August for presentation to the King was withheld on account of his Majesty's ill health till 16th November.

The Duke  
undertakes  
Roman  
Catholic  
emanipa-  
tion.

It has been commonly supposed and frequently stated that the Duke of Wellington was converted on the Roman Catholic question by the apprehension of a rebellion in Ireland. It is doing him a grievous injustice to associate his action with any such motive. He entertained, it is true a passionate horror of civil war but no man was less likely to alter his course under terrorism. His true motive was briefly expressed in a letter to Lord Camden written on 31st March 1801 the day the Emancipation Bill came before the House of Lords, one of many written in answer to objections raised to the

change of policy Lord Camden had written to tell the Duke ANN 1828 that Lord Chatham considered the time unfavourable for dealing with the question

"I don't know whether this letter will answer Lord Chatham's objection as to the time. The truth is there was no time to be lost. Matters were getting worse every day. I don't think they were tending directly to rebellion. The leading agitators were too well aware of the relative strength of the parties, and of their own peril, to venture upon that extremity. But the state of society was becoming worse daily, and we should very soon have had the resident Protestants crying out for a settlement." \*

Another misconception of the true course of events is that under which warm admirers of the Duke attribute his changed attitude on emancipation to the timid counsels of Peel. Certainly Peel was not so bold as the Duke on this question, not in that he was more disposed than he to yield to the Roman Catholics, but because he hesitated to go so far. He had much rather have resigned his office than undertaken concession, it was fidelity to and confidence in his chief that induced him to face the task, having faced it, his influence on the Duke's scheme was to diminish its scope and to shear from it some of its most valuable safeguards. The Duke was prepared to subsidise the Irish priesthood to the extent of £300,000 a year, Peel could not approve of setting up a dual Church establishment in Ireland. In other respects the draft was modified to reconcile it to Peel's assent, and the measure submitted to Parliament was far less thorough and effective than the Duke, if single-handed, would have made it.

Reflection during his retirement at Cheltenham confirmed the Duke in his judgment that the position of a Cabinet, divided on what had become the chief question in domestic politics, was no longer tenable. None knew better than he



deprived of office, and the Lord Lieutenancy was conferred ANN 1829, on the Duke of Northumberland, who, having always voted against the Roman Catholic claims, was not suspected of entertaining the really enlightened views he expressed to the Duke of Wellington on accepting the office\*. All the symptoms on the surface indicated an inflexible policy of repression; yet all the time, as often as the King's health allowed of his attending to business, the Duke pressed on him, by letter and interview, the necessity for giving up the policy of *non possumus*. He wrung from his Majesty a reluctant consent to lay his scheme of relief before the Bishops; they proved as hostile as the King himself to a settlement, or any attempt thereof.

The month of January arrived, and apparently no progress had been made. The Duke was fighting almost single-handed, for he had lost his Canningite colleagues in the Cabinet—the great advocates of concession; Anglesey had been recalled from Ireland, and Peel only held office provisionally. Still the Duke worked incessantly with the King.

"I make it a rule," he told Charles Greville, "never to interrupt him, and when by turning the conversation he tries to get rid of a subject in the way of business that he does not like, I let him talk himself out, and then quietly put before him the matter in question, so that he cannot escape from it."

At last Peel put his shoulder to the wheel.

"Being convinced that the Catholic question must be settled and without delay being resolved that no act of mine should obstruct or retard its settlement, impressed with the strongest feelings of attachment to the Duke of Wellington, of admiration of his upright conduct and intentions as Prime Minister, of deep interest in the success of an undertaking on which he had entered from the purest motives and from the highest sense of public duty, I determined not to insist on retirement from

*Æt.* 59 office, but to make to the Duke the voluntary offer of that official co-operation which he scrupled, from the influence of kind and considerate feelings, to require from me." \*

Peel  
assents to  
emancipa-  
tion, and  
the King  
gives way

Parliament was to meet on 6th February, on 12th January Mr Peel drew up a memorandum to the King, strongly setting forth the reasons which had convinced him that the time had come when the barrier should be removed which prevented the Cabinet from considering the Catholic question.† The poor King's last support had broken down, Peel—Orange" Peel as the staunchness of his Protestant convictions had caused him to be named—had deserted the cause the Duke of Cumberland, luckily for the public peace, was abroad his Majesty had no one but the Bishops to help him against his masterful servants—even among the Bishops, Winchester was found advocating concession‡ and the King succumbed. On 1st February he signed the draft of the Speech from the Throne, in which, after asking Parliament for additional powers for the repression of disorder in Ireland, he was made to say—

' His Majesty recommends that you should take into your deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and that you should review the laws which impose disabilities on his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects.'

The bitterness of surrender was mitigated only by the mention of concurrent measures to disfranchise the Irish forty-shilling freeholder and to regulate the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Roman Catholics.

This must be regarded as the greatest of Wellington's acts as a Minister. No other man in England could have turned King George from the one principle to which he clung with all the intensity of his nature—from the one conviction he held from conscientious scruples. Well might Charles

\* *Peel Letters*, II. 79. † *Civil Despatches* v. 430-440. ‡ *Id.*, 376.

Greville pronounce that the Duke was in a higher position ANN 1829 than any subject had touched in modern times.

"He treats the King as an equal, and the King stands entirely in awe of him. . . . Whatever he may be, he is at this moment one of the most powerful Ministers this country has ever seen. The greatest Ministers have been compelled to bow to the King, or the aristocracy, or the Commons, but he commands them all."

It needed all the strength of this ascendancy to stand the storm which arose on the announcement of the Government programme. The Tories were furious at what they denounced as their betrayal, all over the country the stout Protestant feeling was in arms. Peel pressed the Irish Coercion Bill through all its stages, the Opposition assenting on the faith of the Relief Bill which was to follow, and then gave his constituents an opportunity of pronouncing on his conduct by vacating his seat for Oxford. He was defeated at the poll by 755 votes to 609, and was driven to seek refuge in the small rotten borough of Westbury, where he escaped another reverse only because his Protestant opponent came late upon the field. The Duke of Beaufort and Lord Westmorland both evinced their disapproval of the new departure by declining the office of Lord Privy Seal; Sir Charles Wetherell, the Attorney-General, refused to draft the bill, or to be any party to legislation of which his conscience disapproved, but was permitted, for the nonce, to retain office.

Peel's  
defeat at  
Oxford.

In the middle of February the Duke of Cumberland returned to England. Wellington, foreseeing unmingled mischief from his presence at the King's ear, had earnestly counselled him to stay away. "Your Royal Highness has been already so much mixed up in discussions on the Roman Catholic question that you cannot avoid interfering" \* The remonstrance was in vain, and, personal difference arising, all intercourse shortly ceased between the King's brother and the Prime Minister.

\* *Civil Despatches*, v 483



Æt 59

On 3rd March Peel gave notice that on the 8th he would make known what the Government proposed in regard to the clause in the King's Speech referring to the removal of disabilities. Next morning his Majesty sent for the Duke, Lord Lyndhurst, and Mr Peel to Windsor and desired an explanation of the proposed measure. The Duke of Cumberland had been diligent with his Majesty had persuaded him that the Tories were strong enough to form a Protestant administration by themselves, and that nothing ought to induce him to violate his coronation oath by consenting to concessions to Roman Catholics. The interview between King George and his Ministers was a most distressing one. Peel, being in charge of the bill, proceeded to explain it to the King, who interrupted him by constant digressions upon irrelevant subjects and was as often brought back to the point by the Duke. When they arrived at the clauses framed to repeal the transubstantiation test and to modify the oath of supremacy the King, loudly protesting that he had been misled and deceived,\* refused to give the Royal assent to such a measure, and asked Peel how he intended to act in the House of Commons under such circumstances. Peel replied that he should announce on the morrow his regret that it had been taken out of his power to bring forward the promised Relief Bill in his official capacity as he had no longer the honour of being his Majesty's Minister. The Duke and Lord Lyndhurst likewise made their resignations and the King closed the interview which had lasted five hours and a half by dismissing his Ministers with a kiss on each cheek.

The King  
changes  
his mind.

The Prime Minister the Lord Chancellor and the Home Secretary then returned to London out of office. That night there was a Cabinet dinner at Lord Bathurst's, where, of course, the situation was closely discussed. All concluded that the Government was out except the Duke.

"Don't be afraid" said he, before to-morrow morning

*Salisbury MSS.*

depend upon it I shall hear from the King again." \* The ANN 1829 words were scarcely spoken before the Duke was summoned home to receive a letter from the King.

The King withdraws his assent.

"Windsor Castle, Wednesday evening,

"8 o'clock, 4th March, 1829

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—As I find the country would be left without an administration, I have decided to yield my opinion to *that* which is considered by the Cabinet to be for the immediate interests of the country. Under these circumstances you have my consent to proceed as you propose with the measure. God knows what pain it costs me to write these words.

"G. R."

*The Duke of Wellington to the King.*

"London, 4th March, 1829, at midnight

"I have just received your Majesty's most gracious letter of 8 p m., and I assure your Majesty that I sincerely lament the necessity which exists for urging your Majesty to sanction measures the adoption of which appears to occasion your Majesty so much pain. Mr. Peel will proceed with the Bills to-morrow, in the full confidence and with the full understanding that your Majesty's servants have your sanction and support, and that your Majesty will go through with us. I entreat your Majesty to give your gracious approbation to my letter of the 2nd instant, containing the Minute of Cabinet; or to inform me if my understanding of your Majesty's letter of this afternoon is not correct. Which is humbly submitted, etc.

"WELLINGTON"

*The King to the Duke of Wellington*

"Windsor Castle, Thursday morning, quarter-past 7,

"from my bed, 5th March, 1829

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am awakened by the messenger with your letter, and as I know that you are much pressed for time, I send him off again immediately. *You have put the right construction upon the meaning of my letter of last evening*, but, at the

Es. 59. Esq., dated Eastwell Park, March 14th, 1829 signed *Winchilsea and Nottingham* and I shall be very much obliged to your Lordship if you will let me know whether that letter was written by you and published by your authority

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"WELLINGTON"

*The Earl of Winchilsea to the Duke of Wellington.*

"Eastwell Park, Ashford, 18th March, 1829.

"MY LORD,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's letter of the 16th instant, and I beg to inform you that the letter addressed to H. N. Coleridge, Esq., was inserted in the *Standard* by my authority. As I had publicly given my approbation and sanction to the establishment of King's College, London, last year, by becoming a subscriber to it, I thought it incumbent upon me in withdrawing my name, also publicly to state my reasons for so doing

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"WINCHILSEA AND NOTTINGHAM"

*The Duke of Wellington to the Earl of Winchilsea.*

"London, 19th March, 1829.

"MY LORD—I have had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 18th instant. Your Lordship is certainly the best judge of the mode to be adopted in withdrawing your name from the list of the subscribers to King's College. In doing so, however, it does not appear necessary to impute to me, in no measured terms, disgraceful and criminal motives for my conduct in the part which I took in the establishment of the college. No man has a right, whether in public or private by speech, in writing or in print, to insult another by attributing to him motives for his conduct, public or private, which disgrace or criminate him. If a gentleman commits such an act indiscreetly in the heat of debate, or in a moment of party violence he is always ready to make reparation to him whom he may thus have injured. I am convinced your Lordship will upon reflection, be



THE RIGHT HON SIR HENRY HARDINGE, G.C.B., M.P.,  
AFTERWARDS FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT HARDINGE

[Vol II p 232]



anxious to relieve yourself from the pain of having thus insulted ANN 1829  
a man who never injured or offended you.

"I have the honour to be, etc ,

" WELLINGTON "

The last letter was carried by Sir Henry Hardinge to Lord Winchelsea, with instructions to demand an apology. This Lord Winchelsea declined, though he offered to express regret for having mistaken the Duke's motives, provided the Duke would declare that when he presided at the meeting for the establishment of King's College, he had not in contemplation a measure of Roman Catholic relief. He appointed Lord Falmouth to conduct further communications with Sir Henry Hardinge acting for the Duke. The Duke, however, wrote once more to Lord Winchelsea.

" London, 20 March, 1829, 6½ p m.

" MY LORD,—Sir Henry Hardinge has communicated to me a memorandum signed by your Lordship, dated 1 p m , and a note from Lord Falmouth dated 3 p m

" Since the insult, unprovoked on my part, and not denied by your Lordship, I have done everything in my power to induce your Lordship to make me reparation,—but in vain. Instead of apologising for your own conduct, your Lordship has called upon me to explain mine. The question for me now to decide is this: Is a gentleman who happens to be the King's Minister to submit to be insulted by any gentleman who thinks proper to attribute to him disgraceful or criminal motives as an individual? I cannot doubt of the decision which I ought to make on this question. Your Lordship is alone responsible for the consequences

" I now call upon your Lordship to give me that satisfaction for your conduct which a gentleman has a right to require, and which a gentleman never refuses to give

" I have the honour, etc ,

" WELLINGTON "

A meeting having been arranged to take place the following morning in Battersea Fields,\* Hardinge desired Dr.

\* Not at Wimbledon as Charles Greville has it, vol 1. p 192

*Æt 59.* Hume to be in attendance. The good man only knew that it was an affair of honour between gentlemen. In the interesting report of the circumstances which he drew up for the Duchess of Wellington he has given an amusing description of his dismay when the Duke himself rode up with Hardinge.

Well, doctor," said the Duke, laughing, "I dare say you little expected it was I who wanted you to be here."

"Indeed, my lord," replied the doctor in great agitation, "you certainly are the last person I should have expected here."

"Ah, perhaps so" returned the Duke, "but it was impossible to avoid it, you will see by-and-by that I had no alternative, and could not have done otherwise."

The Duke, strange to say had no duelling pistols still more strangely it was the doctor who produced a pair for his use, and afterwards loaded them, Hardinge having lost an arm at the battle of Ligny. Lords Winchilsea and Falmouth arrived late, their coachman having driven them to Putney Bridge instead of Battersea Bridge.

The five gentlemen walked across the first field to the fence on the other side, where, perceiving some people at work they crossed a ditch into a second field.

"Now then, Hardinge," said the Duke, as soon as his opponent was on the ground, "look sharp and step out the ground. I have no time to waste. Damn it!" he continued, "don't stick him up so near the ditch. If I hit him he will tumble in." \*

The gentlemen having taken their places, Hardinge advanced halfway between them, and summoned Lord Winchilsea and Lord Falmouth to listen to his protest against pushing matters any further and a discussion ensued which certainly seems inconsistent with the traditional punttilio observed on such occasions. Hardinge represented the Duke of

\* Not in Dr Hume's narrative, though he mentions the ditch, but told by him to the late Admiral Sir G Seymour. The exact spot is supposed to have been in the hollow now filled by the Ladies Pond.

Wellington, who was the challenger, and surely remonstrance ANN 1829  
at this stage on his part was not a little anomalous. However,  
it led to nothing, and Sir Henry, pointing to some people  
who had collected at the end of the field and were viewing  
the proceedings with curiosity, said, "We had better take our  
ground. The sooner this affair is over the better."

The seconds then stepped back. Lord Falmouth asked Sir  
Henry to give the signal, who, after a few seconds, called out,  
"Gentlemen, are you ready—Fire!"

The Duke levelled his pistol at once, but seeing that Lord  
Winchelsea did not move, seemed to hesitate for a moment,  
and then purposely fired wide of him\*. Lord Winchelsea,  
smiling, then raised his arm and fired in the air. The Duke  
stood on his ground, but Lord Winchelsea and Lord Falmouth  
came towards Hardinge, and Falmouth said that his principal,  
having received the Duke's fire, was now in a position to  
make the reparation required. He then took a paper from  
his pocket and began reading it. The Duke, having drawn  
nearer, exclaimed in a low voice, "This won't do, it's no  
apology." Sir Henry then took the paper, walked aside with  
the Duke, and returned presently, saying, "My Lord Fal-  
mouth, it is needless to prolong this discussion. Unless the  
word *apology* is inserted, we must resume our ground." Further consultation took place, which ended in Lord Falmouth  
inserting in pencil the words "in apology" in the expression  
of regret already tendered, which was accepted as satisfactory,  
and the gentlemen exchanged formal salutes. Lord Falmouth,  
who had been in much agitation throughout the affair, then  
began to give to the Duke an explanation of his conduct,  
saying that he had always told Lord Winchelsea he was com-  
pletely in the wrong.

"My Lord Falmouth," said the Duke, interrupting him,

\* *Brialmont*, III. 361. It ought to be recorded that Lord Winchelsea had  
written to Lord Falmouth overnight to say that it was his determination not to  
fire at the Duke, and that after the first fire he should offer the expression of  
regret which he would then be ready to make (*Civil Despatches*, v. 539, note).



*Æt. 59* — "I have nothing to do with these matters." Then, touching the brim of his hat with two fingers, he added, "Good morning, my Lord Winchilsea, good morning, my Lord Falmouth, mounted his horse, and rode off with Sir Henry Hardinge, leaving Dr Hume to pack up the pistols.

*The Duke's justification of himself.* The affair was over with less mischief than might have ensued, a curious interlude in the hurricane of wordy war with which the country was torn, but no notice of it, however brief would be complete without mention of the justification which the Duke offered to persons who took him to task for his conduct in it. A long lecture from Jeremy Bentham, beginning "Ill-advised Man!" and calling on him to stand up in his place in the House of Lords, confess his error declare his repentance and his resolve never under any provocation again to give or receive a challenge, is simply minuted "Compliments. The Duke has received his letter" But in reply to a remonstrance from the Duke of Buckingham he entered into full explanation.

"London, 21st April, 1820.

"MY DEAR DUKE,—I am very much obliged to you for your letter of the 6th, which I received this morning. The truth is that the duel with Lord Winchilsea was as much part of the Roman Catholic question, and it was as necessary to undertake it and carry it to the extremity to which I did carry it, as it was to do everything else which I did do to attain the object which I had in view. I was living for some time in an atmosphere of calumny. I could do nothing that was not misrepresented as having some base purpose in view. If my physician called upon me, it was for treasonable purposes. If I said a word, whether in Parliament or elsewhere, it was misrepresented for the purpose of fixing upon me some gross delusion or falsehood. Even my conversations with the King were repeated, misrepresented and commented upon and all for the purpose of shaking the credit which the public were inclined to give to what I said. The courts of justice were shut, and not to open till May. I know that the 13th must have been the 15th of April. In this state

of things Lord Winchelsea published his furious letter. I immediately perceived the advantage it gave me; and I determined to act upon it in such a tone as would certainly put me in the right. Not only was I successful in the execution of my project, but the project itself produced the effect which I looked for and intended that it should produce. The atmosphere of calumny in which I had been for some time living cleared away. The system of calumny was discontinued. Men were ashamed of repeating what had been told to them; and I have reason to believe, moreover, that intentions not short of criminal were given up in consequence of remonstrances from some of the most prudent of the party, who came forward in consequence of the duel. I am afraid that the event itself shocked many good men. But I am certain that the public interests at the moment required that I should do what I did. Everything is now quiet; and in Ireland we have full reason to be satisfied. We must, however, lose no time in doing everything else that is possible to promote the prosperity of that country." \*

The Relief Bill came before the Lords on 31st March. The most practised politicians could form no estimate of its prospects. The Princes were divided, the Bishops were divided; the King made no secret of his hopes that the measure would be thrown out, and he was bombarded by innumerable petitions from Protestants in the country. The speech of the Duke of Clarence, the heir presumptive to the throne, had been strongly in favour of the bill, and the Duke of Cumberland told the King that it was believed outside to represent his Majesty's real feelings. This made the King very angry; in private audiences, to which he admitted the heads of the Protestant party, he constantly represented himself as having been misled and forced into measures for relief of the Catholics, and he even went so far as to write a letter to that effect to Lord Eldon, with a request that it should not be published till after his (the King's) death †.

The Relief  
Bill in the  
Lords

\* *Civil Despatches*, v 585

† *Salisbury MSS*

Æt. 59

"If I had known in January 1828" wrote the Duke a few months later to Sir W. Knighton, "one tithe of what I do now and of what I discovered in one month after I was in office, I should never have been the King's Minister, and should have avoided loads of misery! However I trust that God Almighty will soon determine that I have been sufficiently punished for my sins, and will relieve me from the unhappy lot which has befallen me. I believe there never was a man suffered so much, and for so little purpose." \*

The King told the Duke that he might have his way so far as passing the Emancipation Bill through Parliament, but that the Royal Assent would be withheld. Thus the Duke plainly told the King would be a dishonourable proceeding, both to Ministers and to the Opposition, seeing that the Coercion Bill had been allowed to pass only on the faith of the Emancipation Bill to follow. The King had no alternative but to fulfil his pledge or to find new Ministers which, as even the Duke of Cumberland admitted, 'could not be done in a few hours. †

The  
Emancipa-  
tion Bill in  
the Lords.

The Emancipation Bill came before the Lords for second reading on 2nd April the division took place after three days' debate, in which Lord Eldon and the Archbishop of Canterbury led the opposition. The result justified Lord Clarendon's estimate of their lordships' discipline the second reading was carried by a majority of 105—217 votes to 112. Out of twenty nine Bishops voting, ten supported the bill. On 10th April the bill passed the third reading in the Lords it was taken down to Windsor on the 11th, returned on the 13th with the Royal Assent. Parliament adjourned for the Easter holidays on the 16th, reassembled on the 28th, on which day for the first time since the Revolution, Roman Catholic peers took the oaths and their seats in the House of Lords.

\* *Civil Despatches*, vi. 291

† *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE EVE OF REFORM.

1830-1831.

March 26, 1830	Defeat of the Government on the Estimates	November 15	Defeat of the Government and resignation of Ministers
April 5 .	Defeat of the Government on the Jews Relief Bill	„ 20	Lord Grey forms a Ministry
June 26	Death of George IV The Duke desires to retire	March 21, 1831	The first Reform Bill.
„	William IV keeps the old Ministry	April 19	Defeat of the Government Dissolution of Parha-
„	General election.	„ 25	Death of the Duchess of Wellington.
November 1	Overtures from the Whigs and Canningites	„ 27	The windows of Apsley House broken by the Reform mob.
„ 2	The Duke puts down his foot on Reform		

PERSONALLY, as well as politically, the Duke had to pay a heavy penalty for dealing with the Roman Catholic claims. Some of his oldest associates and political supporters ranged themselves against him, his Government was carried on by means of the precarious support of the Whigs, the solid earth seemed to have failed beneath the feet of the Old Tories when their champions, Wellington and Peel, turned aside from the course they had steered for so many years. Regarding these men merely as supporters, the Duke may be supposed to have endured the parting without ,

The Duke's position after the Emancipation Act.

Æt 60. great pain. It was the cost reckoned in advance of carrying on the King's Government in the only possible way "The party!" exclaimed he to Lady Salisbury when, on a later occasion she expressed apprehension of a split in the party "the party! What is the meaning of a party if they don't follow their leaders? Damn em! let em go!"

In respect, however to some old comrades and personal friends his feelings must have been acute, though it was never his way to allow them outward expression. Lord Anglesey for instance, who as Lord Uxbridge, had handled the cavalry at Waterloo so ably, so gallantly and with such splendid effect, complained bitterly of his treatment. He had been removed from the Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland for undue encouragement to the Roman Catholic agitation, fifteen days later the Government produced a measure conceding the very object of that agitation. One cannot but sympathise with his indignation, yet the Duke could not overlook Anglesey's breach of duty in not administering the law as it stood, instead of anticipating the proximate change therein. The Duke cared nothing for popularity, he knew well that if he had resisted the Roman Catholic claims, to quote his own words, "he might have made himself the most popular Minister that ever presided over the councils of a sovereign." But genuinely as he despised the incense of the masses, he was penetrated with a sense of duty in governing them justly and temperately and, having made up his mind that concession was just and for the advantage of the people, he neither shrank from the cost nor complained at having to pay it.

There was little at first to recompense Ministers for the effort and sacrifice involved in the emancipation of Roman Catholics. In Ireland the effect of conciliation was neutralised by the discontent arising out of severe agricultural depression, it was shorn of its grace by the refusal of the House of Commons on technical grounds, to allow O'Connell to take



Art 60. the one for which it is given ; and most particularly to that one, viz. the payment of the arrears of an exorbitant rent. You may rely upon it that you have judged correctly in refraining from giving the public money to relieve the existing distress. ' The Irish gentlemen of all ranks must be made to feel, or we shall never have a permanent remedy ' "

In Great Britain also distress prevailed in many industries at Rochdale, Manchester Bethnal Green, and elsewhere there were formidable riots, and in agricultural districts wages sank to starvation level and poor rates were mounting to an alarming extent. Country gentlemen instinctively relied on the Tories to help them, for the Government was still Tory in name their expectation was dashed when Parliament met on 4th February 1830 by the cold comfort contained in the Speech which Ministers prepared for the King

' It would be most gratifying to the paternal feelings of his Majesty to be enabled to propose measures calculated to relieve the difficulties of any portion of his subjects, and at the same time compatible with the general and permanent interests of his people. It is from a deep solicitude for these interests that his Majesty is impressed with the necessity of acting with extreme caution in reference to this important subject. His Majesty feels assured that you will concur with him in assigning due weight to the effect of unfavourable seasons, and to the operation of other causes which are beyond the reach of legislative control or remedy ' "

The resentment stirred by this chilly philosophical lecture took an unusual form. Fifteen years had passed since any amendment had been moved in Parliament upon the Speech from the Throne. In the Lords Lord Stanhope, in the Commons Mr Knatchbull Tory member for Kent, now moved amendments. The first was easily resisted by the help of the Whig peers, but the second was nearly fatal to the Duke's

administration The Government Whips had made up their ANN 1830 books for defeat, which was only averted by the sudden and unexpected accession of Lord Howick, son of Lord Grey, who, chiefly out of dislike of Brougham, carried with him Hume and the Radicals into the Ministerial lobby. Matters mended for a while after this escape, but the session was marked by the rise of a formidable financial critic in the person of Sir James Graham, who, an industrious student of Adam Smith's writings and an able exponent of economical principles, induced the Government to undertake a revision of salaries, establishments, and pensions with the object of retrenchment in expenditure. The result was that although the national defences were already, in the Duke of Wellington's opinion,\* in a dangerously weakened condition, half a million was pared off the army estimates, and another half million off the estimates for the navy, ordnance, and miscellaneous service. The Government, however, in proposing to abolish some sinecures, thought it incumbent on them to provide pensions for those thrown out of office. Lord Bathurst drew a salary of nearly £4,000 a year as Teller of the Exchequer, Lord Melville one of nearly £3,000 a year as Keeper of the Privy Seal in Scotland. Neither office entailed any work, nor was it proposed to abolish either of them, yet when it was decided to abolish the office of Commissioner of the Navy, held by Lord Melville's son, and that of Commissioner of the Victualing Department, held by Lord Bathurst's son, the Treasury proposed that they should receive respectively pensions of £500 and £400 a year for life. Each official had only held his appointment for less than four years. This was too strong for the stomach even of an unreformed Parliament, and the votes were refused, against the Government, by a majority of sixteen.

First defeat of the Government

The next defeat sustained by the Government, in resisting the introduction of a bill to admit Jews to Parliament,

Second defeat of the Government

\* See his long and elaborate memorandum to Lord Godolphin in 1827 (*Chancery Despatches*, iv 106).



Æt 60. revealed to Wellington yet more clearly the disaffection of his old supporters. Peel was away at Drayton, attending his father's death-bed.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Right Hon. Robert Peel.*

London, 6th April, 1830.

"Goulburn will have written you an account of the disaster last night. It came upon me quite unexpected. As far as I could form a judgment from what I heard from others, as well as from what about sixty members of Parliament who dined with me on Saturday and Sunday said, I was inclined to think that *we could not have carried the measure if we had wished it.* It appears, however not only that there are many of our friends in favour of it but that, as usual, many, pretending that they did not like to oppose a measure for which they should afterwards be called upon to vote, etc. stayed away."

The Ministry remained in office partly by grace of the Opposition and partly because of its disorganisation. When Tierney, the nominal leader of the Whigs in the House of Commons, died in January 1830 the party distrusting the more brilliant Brougham, chose Lord Althorpe to put at their head, who set to work in businesslike fashion to organise his forces. The state of the King's health, however, had the effect of protecting Ministers from a systematic attack.

The Duke's  
relations  
with  
George IV

The Duke of Wellington had obtained a great ascendancy over George IV., who was by no means deficient in natural ability though it was obscured and rendered capricious by his irregular habits of life. He could not fail to value the sterling qualities and unvarying sincerity of his servant. During the negotiations for Canning's return to the Cabinet in 1822, in which the Duke took the foremost part, the King wrote to Lord Liverpool from Scotland, agreeing not to make up his mind about Canning till he saw his Ministers but added in a postscript, "Upon no account delay a certain

gentleman's departure for India," alluding to Canning's ANN 1830 appointment as Governor-General Lord Liverpool read this letter to his colleagues, suppressing the postscript. The other Ministers threatened to resign if Canning were not admitted

"No," said the Duke, "we will not resign; if possible, we will persuade the King to take Canning; if not, we will do the best we can."

When the King heard this, he said to the Duke, "You are the only one who has treated me like a gentleman. I will follow your advice" \*

The King, however, was always subject to the influence of a steadier will than his own; intercourse with Canning had worked a great change on his feelings towards the Duke, which were greatly, and not unreasonably, embittered by the Duke's behaviour about the command of the army. Then came the Roman Catholic question, bringing on the scene the Duke of Cumberland, whose efforts to destroy the Duke of Wellington's influence were unceasing †. It has been shown above how far they were successful, but in his last illness King George conceived a dislike to the Duke of Cumberland, and it was with difficulty that Wellington persuaded his Majesty to see his brother. Unhappy King! his last days were distraught with suspicion, and disquieted by considerations which one would fain dissociate from a death-bed. Wellington was witness of some strange incidents in the

\* *Salisbury MSS*

† In justice to the Duke of Cumberland it must be said that his motives in resisting the Duke were entirely founded on his own objections to Catholic emancipation. Writing to Colonel Cooke when the Duke first formed his administration, he said, "I look upon it as a most fortunate event for the country that His Majesty has made choice of the Duke of Wellington for the place of Premier, for, if you remember, when I had the pleasure of seeing you here [Berlin] last summer, I then ventured to say that had I been in England this time, last year, when that calamity befell our country of Lord Liverpool's illness, I would have exerted every possible means to have persuaded the Duke then to have accepted his present situation, which, depend upon it, he is completely able to fill, for though not so eloquent as Mr Canning, still, believe me, he is in everything else his superior" (*Camb. Dispatches* iv 262)

*Ex. 60.* closing scenes.\* It became necessary as the King grew weaker to obtain an Act of Parliament authorising his Majesty to use a stamp instead of affixing the sign manual to papers submitted by his Ministers. The Duke went down to Windsor to propose this to the King, who said he was too ill to receive him. Sir Henry Halford then walked on the terrace for a while with the Duke. The King, hearing they were together called his secretary Sir William Knighton, and said—

“Go and see what that little snivelling fellow my physician has to say to my Prime Minister, find out, and bring me word. Mind you tell me the truth!”

Incidents  
in George  
IV's last  
illness.

Service was read every morning during these last weeks in the King's bedchamber Lady C—— being present with others, and it was his Majesty's extraordinary fancy to pronounce the benediction himself at the close, as head of the Church of England. He sent word to Lady C—— by Sir William Knighton that he intended to leave her every thing he had. When Sir William returned, “Well,” said the King, “how did she receive it?”

“She was very much affected, sir” answered Knighton, “and burst into tears.”

“Oh, she did, did she,” was the King's reply, but although he lived six weeks longer and although Lady C—— took care that pen and ink should always be at his bedside, the promised will was never made. The Duke of Wellington, who was very frequently at Windsor during his Majesty's illness, took every precaution that the will should not be executed.

Often it has been made the reproach of modern society that so much of its morality is conventional, but it requires an effort to realise that there was a good deal of conventional immorality also previous to the present reign. Puritan austerity never prevailed to purge continental courts and society to the extent it did in England and Scotland with  
sty there was imported, a code and

practice which European subjects had grown accustomed to ANN 1830  
 accept as characteristic of monarchy. The great middle class  
 in Britain continued to treat private irregularity as something  
 disreputable, and the example of a pure domestic life set by  
 George III. did much to endear that Sovereign to his people.  
 Unfortunately the evil tradition was revived in the person of  
 his son, who, during two-thirds of his father's long reign,  
 maintained a rival Court according to the old and worst  
 pattern. Royal licentiousness was not only winked at and  
 condoned, receiving a kind of parliamentary sanction by the  
 application of public money to the payment of the Prince  
 Regent's debts, it assumed a semi-official character. Thus it  
 had come to pass in his latter days that, although reduced  
 by disease to a condition in which the orderly, quiet regimen  
 of an invalid would have been natural and easy to George IV.,  
 he considered it inconsistent with his credit to be without a  
 chief *liaison*, and scarcely less so to be without a rival. At  
 first he professed to be jealous of Lord Ponsonby, but during  
 his last illness he confided to the Duke of Wellington that  
 his brother Cumberland was supplanting him in Lady C——'s  
 affections. The King often complained, also, to the Duke  
 about Lady C——'s covetousness; "but," said he, "at my  
 age and with my infirmities it is not worth looking out for  
 another."

Wellington's own morality in certain respects was far from  
 rigid, but self-respect—pride, perhaps, were a fitter definition  
 —made him keep his own foibles secret, and caused him to  
 abhor cynical profligacy in others. George IV's habits were  
 a severe trial to the Duke, though he admitted that his  
 Majesty was often brilliantly witty in conversation. Of  
 George III. he said to Lady Salisbury that he was the best  
 king England ever had, and understood kingcraft the most  
 thoroughly—a far superior man in real ability to his son,  
 though he had not the same quickness and talent. However,  
 he had no scruple in throwing over his friends or his instru-  
 ments whenever it suited his purpose. But Wellington,

The Duke's  
 opinion of  
 George III.  
 and  
 George IV.

Æt 61. — passed a very different and far severer judgment upon George IV, in terms which that King's harshest censors have scarcely exceeded. It avails not to repeat them, spoken as they were under the seal of intimate friendship, yet without a knowledge that they were spoken—that this judgment was pronounced—no man could rightly understand the nature of Wellington's loyalty to the Crown. Mistrusting the man and detesting his habits, the Duke never failed in duty to the monarch. Loyalty esteem, and personal affection have gone hand in hand so long in this country, that no public man now living has ever been called upon to exercise the first without the support of the other sentiments. Statesmen are trained, or ought to be trained, to dissociate the Crown from the personal attributes of its wearer, yet in a period when thrones were shaking and institutions crumbling away all over Europe, the unpopularity of George IV added no small burden to the responsibilities of his Ministers.

Death of  
George IV

The King's last moments were not without dignity. Waking shortly before three on the morning of 26th June, he complained of faintness, and his attendant physician, Sir Wathen Waller prepared some sal volatile and water. His Majesty could not drink it, and Sir Henry Hallford was sent for, but before he entered the room, the King pressed Sir Wathen's hands, saying, in a strong voice, "My boy, this is death." He never spoke again, but peacefully expired a few minutes later.

With the Duke of Clarence, who succeeded to the throne as William IV, Wellington had passed through some unpleasant experience, having had, as head of the King's Government, first to reprimand him sharply for the arbitrary exercise of his office of Lord High Admiral, and then to remove him from office altogether. The Duke, therefore, could scarcely expect that he should retain his Majesty's confidence but King William was gifted with good temper and acted with commendable dignity on assuming the Crown. Bygones with him were bygones, he continued his late office, and the Duke found him to be

Relations  
of the  
Duke with  
William  
IV

a monarch far more worthy of confidence than George IV. ANN. 1830.  
 Moreover, William had done nothing to earn a share of the late King's unpopularity; indeed, as a sailor he enjoyed that kindly favour which the English people have always shown to those who go down to the sea in ships. All this was well, for the times were entering upon a troubled phase. A cyclone of revolution was raging almost within sound of our shores. In Paris, the attempt of Charles X. and his Minister Polignac ended in the revolution of July, the abdication of the King on 2nd August, and the proclamation of Louis Philippe by the Provisional Government on the 7th. In Belgium, the union with Holland imposed on the Belgians by the Congress of Vienna had never been a comfortable one. The affinities of the Belgians were far more French than Dutch, and scenes as violent as those in Paris began to be enacted in Brussels on 25th August. All the chief towns in Belgium demanded the dissolution of the union; the Prince of Orange, endeavouring to take possession of Brussels, was compelled after four days of street fighting to withdraw his forces to Antwerp. The King of Holland appealed to France and the Allies, a conference of the representatives of the Great Powers, held in London on 4th November, decreed an armistice and the withdrawal of all Dutch troops from Belgium, and the Belgian people obtained their independence.

Revolutions in France and Belgium

In these disturbances the Duke of Wellington's efforts were consistently directed to the maintenance of constituted authority. Canning had created a popular interest in British foreign policy which it had never possessed before, by imparting thereto a novel character sympathetic with the general revolt against autocracy, a revolt to which Wellington, though a constitutional Minister and faithful to the British constitution as he knew it, would lend no assistance. Liberal institutions, even in the limited sense of pre-reform days, were well enough for Englishmen, but he disbelieved in their safety for Continental nations. Canning had exerted himself to obtain good terms for the Greeks, and had inspired

Æt 61 many of his countrymen with a generous sympathy for that race with all its noble associations. Wellington, on the contrary, disapproved of Canning's Greek policy,\* the dominant note of his own was the same which, to this day jars so discordantly on Liberal ears and was concisely expressed in one of his Cabinet memoranda in November 1830 "The policy of the British Government has invariably been to prevent the overthrow of the Turkish Power in Europe, and the substitution for it of a Russian Power or a Power under Russian influence at Constantinople."†

The Duke had been the principal figure in the group which rearranged the map of Europe in 1815, he had been the chief agent in making such a rearrangement possible, and was not disposed to have any hand in disturbing it out of consideration for national or social aspirations, Legitimists and Conservatives all over the Continent drew courage from his position as Minister of England. For the same reason, even before the first tremours of the great convulsion of Reform made themselves felt the popular party in Britain had been gradually learning to look upon him as their implacable foe. Lord Durham, who owed his pedigree to Wellington's confirmation of Goderich's recommendation,‡ wrote to Brougham about the "odious insulting, aide-de-campish, incapable dictatorship" and the struggles for freedom in foreign nations communicated an impulse to discontent and desire for change in the British and Irish constituencies, which augured ill for the prospects of the Government in the elections. Added to all this was the

\* "It may be safely said by anybody that I did not approve of the Treaty (of London). The truth is that I did everything I could to prevail upon Mr Canning not to enter into the Treaty; and he certainly negotiated it, as far as the negotiations went before the illness and secession of Lord Liverpool, without the knowledge of any of his colleagues except myself. But they and we all are highly blamable for having suffered the negotiation to move at all after we had, and particularly I had, a knowledge of it. (Letter to Dean Phillips: *Great Despatches*, vii. 170).

† *Great Despatches*, vii. 335.

‡ *Ibid.*, iv. 168.

prevailing distress, arising, not as in 1816, 1819, and 1822 ANN 1830. from the dearness of breadstuffs, but from their relative cheapness, which caused farmers to cut down wages, and to the substitution of machinery for hand labour.

The Duke was fully aware of the weakness of his position,<sup>The Duke proposes to resign</sup> and the necessity for reinforcing it by inducing the Canningites to re-enter the Cabinet, but he could not bring himself to invite them back himself.

"I think we could get on in the House of Lords," he wrote to Peel on 30th June, "the question is, what is to be done in the House of Commons? I have as little feeling of political animosity as any man, but I don't think that I personally could or ought to sit in a Cabinet again as First Lord of the Treasury with Mr Huskisson,\* Lord Palmerston, or Mr Charles Grant. In considering this matter you and I must not look to what is personal to ourselves, but what is necessary for the King's service, and we must make sacrifices to provide for its security. I have long been of opinion that it is desirable that the power of the Government should be concentrated in one hand, and that hand that of the leader of the House of Commons. The affairs of the country cannot now be otherwise conducted with advantage, and I know of no person so capable of conducting them as yourself. I would earnestly urge, therefore, that I should take the opportunity of the King's death to retire from office; that you should undertake the Government as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, forming your Government as you may think proper, in the several offices. I would support or serve any Government that you might form." †

The weakness of the Government became more apparent after the elections. The Tories, indeed, came back from the country in a majority, but the Old Tories had learnt to distrust Wellington and Peel, and were almost more hostile

\* Six weeks later Mr Huskisson was killed in the presence of the Duke and Sir Robert Peel at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. He had left his seat in the train to shake hands with the Duke, and in returning to it, tripped and fell before a passing engine.

† *Civil Despatches*, vii 108



Æt 61 — section of the Opposition by the Duke himself. The Speech from the Throne was under discussion in the House of Lords it contained an ominous reference to the revolution in Belgium, and indicated that Great Britain probably would have to interfere to defend the Netherlands monarchy by force of arms.

"You see," said Lord Grey leader of the Opposition in the Lords, "the danger around you: the storm is on the horizon, but the hurricane approaches. Begin, then, at once to strengthen your houses, to secure your windows, and to make fast your doors. The mode in which this must be done, my lords, is by securing the affections of your fellow-subjects, and—I will pronounce the word—by reforming Parliament."

The Duke could never compare with Grey in eloquence nobody expected it of him yet in statecraft there were many especially in that assembly who assigned to him a high place. Their hearts were chilled by the concluding sentences of his reply—those in which he dealt with his opponents.

'The noble earl has been candid enough to acknowledge that he is not prepared with any measure of reform, and I can have no scruple in saying that his Majesty's Government is as totally unprepared with any plan as the noble lord. Nay I on my own part, will go further and say that I have never read or heard of any measure up to the present moment, which can in any degree satisfy my mind that the state of the representation can be improved, or be rendered more satisfactory than at the present moment. I do not hesitate to declare unequivocally what

my sentiments are. I am fully convinced that the country already possesses a legislature which answers all the purposes of good legislation. I will go further and say that the legislature and the system of representation possesses the full and entire confidence of

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I will go still further and say  
I had, on me the duty of

particularly for a  
y of various  
form, such  
Indispable

of reaching such excellence at once, but my great endeavour ANN 1830  
 would be to form some description of legislature which would  
 produce the same results. . . . I am not only not prepared to  
 bring in any measure of the description alluded to by the noble  
 lord, but I will at once declare that, as far as I am concerned,  
 as long as I hold any station in the Government of the country,  
 I shall always feel it my duty to resist such measures when  
 proposed by others."

The Duke's vehemence was owing, no doubt, in some measure to his indignation at a taunt thrown out by Lord Grey that he had been intimidated into concession to the Roman Catholics.

"I really do not see the advantage of repeating against me the reproach of my having given way upon the Catholic question from motives of fear. I deny that I have been influenced, even in the very slightest degree, by any such motive. I gave way, if it can be termed giving way, solely because the interests of the country required it. I urged the question upon the views of policy, and expediency, and justice, upon these grounds I now justify the measure, and upon these grounds I shall ever defend my conduct."

"I have not said too much, have I?" asked the Duke of Lord Aberdeen as he sat down.

"You'll hear of it!" was the brief but pregnant reply.

Having pronounced his challenge the Duke flinched not from the conflict. With prompt military instinct he drew up a plan for the defence of Apsley House,\* and directed effective measures for putting down meetings which he regarded as seditious, that they assumed a seditious character under the menace of repression was inevitable, but neither Lyndhurst nor Peel seem to have possessed greater prescience than the Duke of the force and justice of the movement. They apprehended violence, indeed, and by a strange fatality the first act of the Ministry, denounced by Lord Wellesley, now amongst the severest critics of his

The  
gauntlet  
thrown

\* *Civil Despatches*, vii 354

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is that I am under the necessity of quitting his service in times ANN 1830.  
of such difficulty abroad as well as at home."

The Duke quitted office in the dusk of discredit and under  
the chill disapproval of all parties. Resigna-  
tion of  
Ministers.

"The effect produced by this declaration exceeds anything I ever saw, and has at once destroyed what little popularity the Duke had left, and lowered him in public estimation so much that, when he does go out of office, as most assuredly he must, he will leave it without any of the dignity and credit which might have accompanied his retirement" \*

His old followers stood aloof, alienated by what they resented as their betrayal on the Roman Catholic question; he disdained to attract new ones by adopting the natural consequence of his first act of reform, in taking up and dealing with the demand for extended electoral rights and in purging the electoral system, as he was ready to do a few months afterwards, when, late in time, he came to recognise the inevitable.

The most painful consequence arising immediately out of this crisis as regarding the Duke of Wellington was the estrangement which it brought about between him and the ablest and faithfullest of his colleagues, Sir Robert Peel

"There's that fellow in the House of Commons," quoth the Duke to Lady Salisbury, "one can't go on without him; but he is so vacillating and crotchety that there's no getting on with him. I did pretty well with him, when we were in office, but I can't manage him now at all. He is a wonderful fellow—has a most correct judgment—talents almost equal to those of Pitt, but he spoils all by his timidity and indecision" †

As to the coldness of some of his other friends, the Duke professed absolute indifference

"There is nobody," he wrote to Lady Salisbury, "who cares so little as I do for an embarrassment such as you describe. I meet

\* *Greville*, part 1 vol 11 p 53

† *Salisbury MSS*, 1831

ET 61. in place of higher attributes. If there was one thing for which the Duke had more aversion than another it was being shown off," yet the Duchess never learnt to avoid it, and delighted in drawing attention to his great qualities and achievements. They formed a couple wholly unsuited to each other and it avails not to scrutinise or criticise their relations more closely. It would be idle to pretend that the parting brought deep grief to the Duke, it is not so referred to in any of his correspondence, indeed, there never was a wife, in her death as in her life, of whom her husband made such rare mention in his letters. To Lady Salisbury indeed, who with the exception, perhaps, of the Arbuthnots, was at this time and continued to be till her death his most intimate correspondent and confidante, the Duke did impart a very frank explanation of his infelicitous experience of married life, of the Duchess's extravagance, of her insincerity towards himself about the amount of her debts, about her flightiness and injudicious treatment of her sons, and these observations are preserved in Lady Salisbury's journal.\* But they were spoken several years after the Duchess's death during her life the Duke never mentioned or treated her but with respect, and it would serve no good purpose to resuscitate slumbering *grievs*. Wellington's life, with all its stir and unceasing activity was a lone one, his sense of having missed something in the lottery of marriage is revealed by a casual remark in one of his conversations. Lady Salisbury asked him whether Lady Peel had any influence over Sir Robert.

"No" he replied, "she is not a clever woman. Peel had no wish to marry a clever woman."

It is very curious," remarked Lady Salisbury "that a man of ability should not care to have a wife capable of entering into subjects in which he takes an interest.

"Aye," said the Duke, "and of anticipating one's meaning, that is 'what a clever woman does—she sees what you mean.' †

\* Salisbury MSS 1837

† *Ibid.*, 1834.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BATTLE OF REFORM.

1831-1834

June 24, 1831	The Second Reform Bill	June 18 . . .	Attacked by a mob in the City
October 8 . .	Thrown out by the Lords		The Duke in the hunting-field.
Dec 12 .	The Thrd Reform Bill		The Duke's letters to Miss J
April 6 1832	Passes second reading in the Lords	January 1834	The Duke and Sir Robert Peel are nominated for the Chancellorship of Oxford University
May 9 .	The Government, having been defeated in Committee, resign on the King's refusal to create Peers		Estrangement between Wellington and Peel
„ 10 .	The Duke undertakes to form a Government.		The Duke's difficulties with his party
„ 15	Resigns the attempt The Duke's great unpopularity	August 2 . .	Death of Mrs Arbuthnot

IN no uncertain tone came the reply of the constituencies to the appeal of a general election Lord John Russell introduced his Second Reform Bill to the new Parliament on 24th June on 8th July it received a second reading by a majority of 136 votes, and on 22nd September, after the Coronation of King William had taken place\* on the 8th, it was laid before the House of Lords The Duke felt no doubts as to the course he should pursue as leader of the Opposition in the Upper Chamber

\* William IV was the first English king crowned in trousers !

Æt 62. "If we take the bill or even give improvements of it, as I understand it, you may rely upon it that neither Lord Grey nor any nobleman of his order, nor any gentleman of his caste, will govern the country six weeks after the Reformed Parliament will meet, and that the race of English gentlemen will not last long afterwards. That is my sincere opinion, founded upon what I see here and have seen elsewhere, and I earnestly recommend it to your attention." \*

With truer prescience Lord Wharncliffe and Lord Harrowby were negotiating with Lord Grey for a compromise. The initiative had been with Lord Grey but there were many Conservative peers—"Waverers" they were called—anxious to anticipate the irresistible and avoid further collision. Long, patiently and eloquently Lord Wharncliffe laboured to prevail on the Duke to listen to reason, his letters are truly statesmanlike and deserve careful perusal,† but his efforts were in vain. The Duke remained obdurate.

"I don't believe," he admitted on 3rd February, 1832, "that we can go on without some Parliamentary Reform, but the passion for Reform, and particularly for *the bill*, no longer rages, whatever may have passed at the meetings in the autumn the fashion is gone by and I firmly believe that when the bill passes, if ever it should pass, it will be to be forced upon the country. But as for civil war or any confusion being caused by another rejection of the bill, I'll answer for it that there will be no such thing if this Government, or any Government, will only perform the duty of discountenancing it." ‡

"Lord Wharncliffe's communications with the Government are at an end" he wrote to Lord Londonderry "Why or what passed, I know not. But I conclude that he found the Radical party too strong for him. You may rely on it that I neither have nor shall have any communication with the Government,

\* *Official Despatches*, viii. 110.

† *Ibid.*, viii. 82, 104, 110, 173, 210 et passim.

‡ *Ibid.*, viii. 203.

excepting in the way of advice in Parliament or through the ANN 1831.  
King" \*

Earlier in the year Lord Salisbury had written to consult the Duke about the course he should pursue in prospect of a meeting of Whigs and moderate Reformers about to be held in Hertford. He himself was disposed to attend the meeting and negotiate with them.

"I should not like, however, to be the first to adopt the course I have suggested without your concurrence, for fear, if the example is followed, it should embarrass you or your party." †

The Duke's reply was the reverse of favourable to compromise.

"All reform is in my opinion bad and dangerous, and every reform would end by being Radical. I should think that a question of universal suffrage being carried against you at Hertford would not look well." ‡

Parliament, prorogued on 20th October, met again on 6th December. On the 12th Lord John Russell introduced his Third Reform Bill. It passed second reading by a majority of two to one. After an ordeal of twenty-two sittings in Committee, it left the House of Commons on 23rd March, and came before the Lords on the 26th. Early in the autumn the King had been urged by Brougham, Durham, and Graham to exercise his prerogative in the creation of enough peers to ensure the safety of the measure. His Majesty, though desiring a settlement of the great question, was averse from taking that course, so were the Government leaders in both Houses, indeed, Lord Grey's dislike to any scheme of swamping the Lords had been the origin of his overtures for a compromise with the Opposition. But when the overtures failed, Grey reluctantly fell back on the exercise of the prerogative, and the King gave his assent. The intention

The Third  
Reform  
Bill.

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 119

† *Salisbury MSS*, January, 1831

‡ *Ibid*



ÆT 63. These opinions separated me from some noble friends of mine, who did not feel themselves placed in the same situation. I regret that separation, even though it be temporary, particularly the separation from that man whom I chiefly honour and I am anxious to declare that even that separation has only raised him in my esteem."\*

Foiled in obtaining Peel to lead the House of Commons, the Duke next tried Baring, who declined on the score of health, though he afterwards accepted office without the leadership. The Speaker Mr Mannors Sutton, was Wellington's next hope, whose reply was friendly, but not reassuring. "If no other arrangement can be made, I must give way though with fear and trembling"† It soon became evident that the Duke had attempted the impossible in undertaking to form a Tory Government with an Opposition of nearly two to one in the House of Commons. Better for his reputation had he never set hand to the task. On Monday 14th May Sir Robert Inglis declared in the House of Commons that he knew no difference between a code of public and private morals, and deplored the Duke's conduct in taking up a measure which on every previous occasion he had vehemently reprobated. Inglis spoke with the greater effect because of the evident pain he suffered in condemning his own leaders.

Peel at once declared the speech to be decisive against any attempt to form a Reform Government out of the anti Reform party. The House rose at shortly before midnight, when the Speaker took Peel, Hardinge, and Croker in his carriage to Apsley House, where they were joined by Baring. An earnest consultation was held, lasting till nearly three in the morning, as to the course to be taken, to save the King from being forced to create peers. At last, on Sir Robert Peel's motion, it was agreed that the Duke should inform the King that to form a Tory administration, pledged to extensive reform, was impossible, and that to save his Majesty's personal honour in

the matter of creating peers, the Duke would abstain, so far as he was concerned, from opposing the bill in the House of Lords" \* At nine o'clock the Duke went to Lord Lyndhurst and informed him that he was going to the King to throw up his commission. When he was gone, Lyndhurst said to his wife, "I wish I had prevailed on him to consult with his party first. I will go after him and detain him."

ANN 1832  
The Duke  
resigns the  
attempt to  
form a  
Cabinet

"You had better start at once," said Lady Lyndhurst, "or he will be gone"

"Plenty of time," replied Lyndhurst, "he must go home first, and he has to breakfast"

But when Lord Lyndhurst arrived at Apsley House the Duke was gone. Following him to St. James' Palace, he found that he had just been admitted to audience with the King, and the fate of the Tory Ministry was sealed. Lord Lyndhurst was admitted, however, and was present with the Duke while his Majesty, with perfect composure, wrote his letter to Lord Grey, after which he began to talk about trifling and indifferent matters †

From their places in the House of Lords the Duke and Lord Lyndhurst on 17th May made explanatory statements, and quitted the House, followed by a large number of Tory peers, thus silently protesting against the measure which they had decided to oppose actively no longer.

How Lord Grey's Whig Ministry came in and carried their bill is part of the public history of the country; it is a page which the biographer of Wellington is fain to turn quickly, for the Duke's action at this crisis is the part of his conduct one dwells on with least admiration. His own defence of it comes nearer to casuistry than anything to which he ever lent himself before or afterwards, and contrasts ill with Peel's *neâ virtute me involvo*.

"I think that the mistake made by my friends is this. First, in not estimating the extent of the advantage of taking the King

\* Croker, ii 167.

† Salisbury MSS, 1832

Æt 63. — out of the hands of the Radicals \*—that is, in reality, of giving the country the benefit of some Government secondly, in not estimating the further advantage of diminishing the mischief of the Reform Bill, and particularly that of the Scotch Bill. In my opinion the advantage first mentioned more than *compensates* for all that would have been lost by our having anything to say to the Reform Bill." †

Yet on the very next day 22nd May the Duke was writing to Lord Eldon—

"I have always considered the Reform Bill as fatal to the Constitution of this country. It was a matter of indifference whether the House of Peers should be first destroyed by the creation of Peers to carry the bill, or should fall with the other institutions of the country." ‡

The Duke's  
great un-  
popularity

The gloomy anticipations entertained by the Duke were deepened, and to some extent justified, by the attitude of the people towards himself. From the pinnacle of fame and popularity he had been lowered to the depth of odium. Coarse reproach and bloodthirsty menace were yelled at him from the very throats which, only a few years before, had ached with unceasing cheers. His matchless services to King and Country were forgotten. For many months he had continued to receive warnings of the danger in which he went of his life—warnings which he put aside lightly enough, although causing the ground floor windows of Apsley House to be protected by iron shutters, organising a complete system of domestic defence, and, when travelling, carrying loaded firearms in his carriage.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Countess of Jersey*

"London, October 18, 1831.

"MY DEAR LADY JERSEY—My House having been surrounded by a Mob all day yesterday I don't think that I should have

\* A sentiment which, after the lapse of a generation, Lord Derby expressed more bluntly in regard to his own and Disraeli's Reform Bill—that "it had dished the Whigs."

† *Orléans Dispatches*, viii. 340.

‡ *Ibid.*, 341

acted very discreetly if I had gone out and had led it to yours, ANN 1832  
 nor would my visit have been very agreeable to you under the  
 circumstances I knew that you dined out yesterday. I concluded  
 that you would be out in the Evening. It is really quite impossible  
 for me to fix a time to go out to see you. My House is constantly  
 surrounded It is so at this moment. I am followed wherever  
 I go, and there a Mob collects . . . Believe me ever yours,

"W" \*

Matters did not mend even when the bill had become law.† On 18th June, the seventeenth anniversary of Waterloo, the Duke was riding back from a visit to the Mint, when he was set upon by a yelling mob who followed him from the Tower through the Minories to Fenchurch Street, where attempts were made to drag him from his horse. Against this danger he was protected by a couple of old soldiers who kept close to his stirrups, and faced about each time the pressure of the crowd brought the Duke to a halt. In Holborn the blackguards began to throw stones and dirt, but now two policemen ranged themselves one on each side of the horse's head, and the Duke, turning down Chancery Lane, rode to the chambers of his quondam Attorney-General, Sir Charles Wetherell. The gate of New Square having been closed behind him, and the mob thus kept at bay, the Duke, followed by his groom, quietly rode out into Lincoln's Inn Fields, and so home to Apsley House

Mobbed  
 and in-  
 sulted in  
 the City

How many street scenes must have passed through Arthur Wellesley's memory during this strange ride! Alleys, bulwarked and barricaded with corpses in sunburnt Seringapatam—drunken heroes firing ball cartridge unsteadily in his honour in the square of blood-steeped Badajos—flowers and waving scarves and *vivas* in Salamanca and Madrid—steady tramp of his own columns streaming into prostrate Paris—was this to be the end of it all—a scuffle—a rush—a well-aimed brick—the fresh cheek blenched, white hair

\* Original at Middleton Park

† It received the Royal Assent on 7th June, 1832

Æt 63. dabbled in blood, the light of those brave old eyes quenched for ever? Or (for on his own life he bestowed no second thought) did not this mad tumult, this orgy of ingratitude, betoken the whelming of his country in that hopeless, aimless anarchy he had striven so stoutly to ward from her shores? He believed it had all come to this. In countless letters he pronounces the conviction that King, Lords, and Commons had been hoodwinked into a conspiracy which should destroy the Constitution, and that social order must soon cease for ever.

*The Duke of Wellington to H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland.*

Apsheorpe, January 1, 1833.

" We are in a most critical situation. The Conservative Party have a Majority in the House of Lords. The Royal Mind will be with them. The Royal Authority, the Administration, the Majority of the H. of Commons, and the decided sense of the County against them, at the same time we know now to a certainty that the Conservative Party consists of the infinite Majority of the landed Proprietors and the great Commercial and Manufacturing Capitalists throughout the three Kingdoms. We must be very cautious in our Measures. A false step might do the greatest injury to the Institutions and Interests of all descriptions which it is our duty as well as our object and our Inclination to support and maintain. We must never forget that in times of Revolution such as those we have the misfortune of witnessing the passions of individuals have an Influence upon public Affairs which on ordinary times they have not, and that it is the duty of those who wish to preserve what exists, not to dispute those passions unnecessarily at the same time that they steadily persevere in their course, making no compromise of Principle or of any Interest.

"I think it very improbable that there will be any desire on the part of those who have the Power of the County in their hands to share it with their Rivals and those who entertain opinions so different from their own. I think that they are much more likely to find themselves under the necessity of making further

concessions to the Democrattick party, and of forming a closer Union with the Radicals It is my opinion that that is the tendency of the Policy of the day, and in my view of the situation of the County the Chances of the junction of the Whigs with the Radicals greatly increase the difficulties and embarrass all our proceedings " \* ANN 1832.

There was not much material for hope even when the newly enfranchised began to exercise their rights While the elections were in progress, Lord Stanhope's tenantry, indeed, drew the Duke's carriage with music into Chevening Park, but a band of miscreants waylaid him with volleys of stones between that place and Wildernesse† The Duke could not pass unnoticed anywhere, but it was always uncertain at this stormy period whether the recognition would take the form of hoots or hurrahs.

"On Friday," he wrote to Lady Salisbury as late as 18th December, "I was hooted returning from hunting through Aldermarten Luckily I am accustomed to it, and I rode through the town as quietly as I did through London I was alone, having sent away my groom to look for my curricule" ‡

The Duke's eldest son, the Marquess of Douro, had offered himself as candidate for Hampshire, and encountered the full displeasure of the new electorate At no time between the Duke and his son did there exist much easy confidence, the Duke was stern in judgment and prompt to pronounce it—the Marquess reserved, with the sensitive consciousness of inferior abilities

"I regret that Douro resigned before he had polled his last man, § and I think those who are contesting other counties at this very moment have some reason to complain of his being in such a hurry to retire He did so without consulting me, although he determined on the measure at Basingstoke, eight

\* *Apsley House MSS*, 1833

† *Stanhope*, 177

‡ *Salisbury MSS*

§ Under the new Act the poll was kept open two days only, instead of fourteen as heretofore

EST 63. miles from hence But we cannot always expect to find wise heads on young shoulders. This is certain he could not have carried the election.\* \*

The Duke's  
action in  
Opposition. However little hope the Duke was able to discern for the monarchy in the future, he perceived that there was a clear duty for the Opposition in the Lords and for the Duke to perceive a duty meant that he did his best to perform it. He was never of the opinion expressed by a statesman of more recent times,† that the chief duty of an opposition was to oppose, and he encountered much difficulty in restraining the activity of his peers and moderating their animosity against all the proposals of Lord Grey's Government.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Earl of Aberdeen*

\* Stratfieldsaye, 18th January 1833.

"I have received your letter and I confess that I find great difficulty in answering it. I have never relished, as you know, the seeking opportunities to carp at and oppose the measures of the Government, the whole course of my life has been different. I dislike such conduct at present more than I did hitherto. In truth we do not know what sort of Constitution we have got—whether a Monarchy or a Republic, or that best (if) of Republics—la Democratie Royale! The principal field of battle of the campaign will be Ireland, and if they are at all fair upon that subject we must support them. I consider Lord Grey's Government as the last prop of the Monarchy, how ever bad it is and however unworthy of Confidence. After him comes Lord ( ) † probably and chaos! It will not be wise for us to endeavour to break down Lord Grey without knowing what is to follow him. The course, then, which I would recommend on the whole is one of attentive observation rather than of action that we should not oppose and bring our opposition to a division, excepting in a case of paramount importance essential to the best interests of the country" ‡

*Salisbury MSS.*

‡ Illegible in original.

† Lord Randolph Churchill.

‡ *Apsley House MSS.*, 1833.

He was not solicitous for the attendance of the Old Tories, AUG 1833  
 with the Duke of Cumberland at their head, in the House of  
 Lords

*To the Marquess of Londonderry*

"Stratfieldsaye, March 7, 1833

"I do not see any prospect of the Necessity for an attendance in the House of Lords. In truth the Revolution is effected. . . Property, and the House of Lords in particular have lost their political Influence. Any Deliberative body composed of Men of Cultivation, of Habits of Business and of Talent may by their Discussions have a moral (influence) in Society and over the Legislature and the Mob. But their Discussions must be opportune, and those of the House of Lords in Particular, which still possesses a Legislative Power, but no political Influence, ought to be very cautiously managed

"I have been here generally amusing myself with the Foxhounds" \*

*To Lord Roden*

"Stratfieldsaye, March 13, 1833

"There is no man who dislikes more than I do the principles and the policy of the existing administration, or is more opposed to their course of action. But I cannot shut my eyes to the state in which parliament and the country are. That there is no power in it excepting to do mischief, and I cannot wish to remove from office men who profess at least to have good intentions in order to place the power in the hands of those who have not the grace even to make such professions. I wish therefore, as far at least as I am personally concerned, to afford no ground for the charge of 'Faction'. Other noble Lords may entertain a different opinion. But I confess that it appears to me that it behoves those who possess large properties and who must feel that the political influence over the councils of the country is in the hands of those who possess nothing, to consider well the course which they ought to follow particularly in the House of Lords" †

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

† Apsley House MSS



Æt 61.

*To the Marquess of Londonderry*

"London, June 6, 1833.

" We must consider of the real situation of the Country, and of that which is best to be done to save our Properties from Destruction. As for Office or Power, both are out of the Question." \*

*To H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland*

"Walmer Castle, October 1st, 1833.

" I must say I have always felt myself in a very awkward, and I must add false Position in opposition to the King's Government. I am connected with the Government in many ways, scarcely a day passes on which I am not under the Necessity of communicating with them on some subject or other. I have been in office and have served the King throughout my life; and I know all the Difficulties in which the Government are placed. I cannot enter upon an opposition to Government without knowing what it is I am to oppose, and with a view to impede their course by increased difficulties. I would diminish those difficulties if I could. Neither could I oppose the Govt with the view to break up the Administration and form a new one. Nobody has a worse opinion of, or less Confidence in, the Existing Ministers than I have. Under their Guidance we have been on the Road to Ruin, we have made some Progress already, and we shall certainly make more. But for the sake of the King and his Family as well as the Country I cannot take upon myself the Responsibility of breaking up the Govt without knowing how or for whom another is to be formed, whether it can be supported—whether it can even claim support and what the King thinks and wishes. Since the year 1830 I have foreseen and lamented the state of things to which we were coming. But I confess that I cannot see the Remedy in the formation of what is called a determined and active opposition to the King's Government, especially in the House of Lords." †

The Duke, oppressed though he was by the conviction that ruin had descended on his country, resumed the ordinary

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

† *Apsley House MSS.*

- avocations and amusements of an English country gentleman, ANN 1838  
dividing his time between Strathfieldsaye and Walmer Castle. Always a warm supporter of the chase, he subscribed liberally to the Vine and the Bramshill hounds in his own neighbourhood,\* and attended then meets as often as he possibly could. "Nim South," a writer in the *New Sporting Magazine*, has left some interesting notes of the Duke's appearance and performance in the field, having apparently been as unfavourably impressed by the one as by the other. He tells how one wet day in 1831 he was waiting for Sir John Cope's hounds at Hatley Row Gate, when he perceived a red coat approaching through the drizzle. As the new-comer drew near, "Nim South" took stock of his attire, which included a scarlet frock coat, a lilac silk waistcoat, kid gloves, a pair of fustian trousers strapped tightly down over a pair of Wellington boots! "And certainly they were Wellingtons in every sense of the word, for the wearer was neither more nor less than the illustrious Arthur himself" The Duke in the hunting-field

"We had," says Nim, "just the sort of day's sport to please a man like the Duke of Wellington, who, though mighty in the field of war, cuts no great figure in the hunting-field. Indeed, to do him all due justice, I have seldom seen a man with less idea of riding than he has. His seat is unsightly in the extreme, and few men get more falls in the course of the year than his Grace. Nevertheless he seemed to enjoy the thing amazingly, and what with leading over occasionally and his groom's assistance, he did very well."

The Duke gave much attention also to the improvement and management of his estate of Strathfieldsaye, spending liberally on the land and laying by all the surplus rents for his successors, who he knew would not enjoy all the sources of emolument which he did. He also spent much of his time at Walmer Castle, his official residence as Warden of the Cinque Ports, an office which he by no means regarded as a sinecure.

\* At one time his subscription to the Vine was £400 a year

ÆT 61.

*Lord Mahon to the Countess of Jersey*

"2nd October 1833.

"Yesterday I dined at Walmer Castle. The Duke is in amazing force. We were to meet their R<sup>l</sup> Highnesses of Cumberland, and sat waiting for them from seven till a quarter to nine. Some country neighbours, being little used to late hours, appeared half dead at the delay" \*

Corre-  
spondence  
with  
Bishop  
Philpotts.

A correspondence between the Duke and Dr Philpotts, Bishop of Exeter took place about this period, throwing some interesting light on the view the Duke took of the obligation of church-going

"Let me beseech your attention to one particular" wrote the prelate, "in which you may do honour to God, and, by His grace, much spiritual good to men—I mean, by regularly attending His public service, by showing before the world that you *glory* in being the servant of God, by setting an example, the value of which will be proportioned to the greatness of your earthly renown." †

The Duke took the Bishop's long lecture very meekly recognising that his admonitor was only discharging the duty of his office.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Lord Bishop of Exeter*

"London, 6th January 1832.

"MY DEAR LORD BISHOP—I am very grateful for your letter. It is highly creditable to your Lordship, and most suitable for you to write it in these times to any individual, more particularly to me, afflicted with sickness as I have been. What I am particularly anxious to remove from your mind is the notion that I am a person without any sense of religion. If I am so, I am unpardonable as I have had opportunities to acquire, and have acquired, a good deal of knowledge on the subject. I don't make much show or boast on any subject. I never have done so. The consequence is that in these days of boasting I have been set

\* Original at Middleton Park.

† *Church Dispatches*, viii. 130.

- down from time to time as the most ignorant and least qualified ANN 1833  
 public man of my time, and this even upon professional matters,  
 upon which it might be imagined that from the commencement  
 of my career I had been sufficiently tried. Then in private life  
 I have been accused of every vice and enormity, and when those  
 who live with me, and know every action of my life and every  
 thought, testify that such charges are groundless, the charge is  
 then brought, 'Oh, he is a man without religion.' As I said  
 before, I am not ostentatious about anything. I am not a  
 'Bible Society man' upon principle, and I make no ostentatious  
 display either of charity or of other Christian virtues, though  
 I believe that, besides enormous sums given to hundreds and  
 thousands who have positive claims upon me, there is not a  
 charity of any description within my reach to which I am not  
 a contributor, although I am convinced, and indeed know, that  
 many of them are gross jobs

- "The next objection is 'He does not go to church!' Whenever  
 or wherever my presence at church can operate as an example, I  
 do go. I never am absent from divine service at Walmer or  
 when I am in Hampshire, or in any place in the country where  
 my presence or absence could be observed. But it must be  
 recollected that some ten years ago I met with an accident which  
 affected my hearing, and, in point of fact, I never hear more  
 than what I know by heart of the Church service, and never one  
 word of the sermon. Then observe that during at least eight  
 months of the year I should have to sit for two hours every week  
 uncovered in a cold church: this would certainly have the effect  
 of depriving me of my sense of hearing altogether. For some  
 time I did attend divine service early in the morning at St  
 James's, which lasted only an hour, but I found it too cold for  
 me, and it is true that I do not attend divine service in any  
 parish in London. But excepting that duty, which I never fail  
 to perform in the country, I don't know of any that I leave  
 unperformed. There is room for amendment in every man, in me  
 as well as in others, and there is nothing better calculated to  
 inspire such amendment than such a letter as that from your  
 Lordship. In answering it as I have done, I hope you will  
 believe that I don't reject the advice. On the contrary I thank,

Æt. 64. you for it, and I assure you that it will not be thrown away upon me. But if you have believed what you have read and heard of me, I must tell you that those reports do not do me justice.\* \*

Of the extraordinary energy shown by the Duke of Wellington in private correspondence many examples might be quoted although he was very scrupulous in destroying during his life almost all the letters he received of an exclusively private nature, especially those from ladies. A few instances may suffice to show the prodigious fluency of his pen at this period.

Mr Croker having sent him in September 1833 a number of pamphlets on foreign affairs with a request for his criticism, the Duke sat down at Walmer Castle and replied on sixty sides of large letter paper! †

The Duke's  
letters to  
Miss J

The Duke's correspondence with Miss J has been published, ‡ and the authenticity of the letters purporting to have been written by him to that lady was hotly disputed some ten years ago. There remains now not a shadow of doubt that they are genuine, § and they must take rank among the most remarkable littlenesses of great men. Miss J was the daughter of English parents of the class of smaller gentry, fashionably educated, possessed of great beauty highly emotional, and a religious zealot. Having succeeded in making a

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 147

† The draft of this document at Apsley House is not, as is usual, in his own handwriting but in a small, close feminine hand. Had he written it himself it would have covered one hundred and twenty pages.

‡ *The Letters of the Duke of Wellington to Miss J*, 1834-1851. London, 1890.

§ Lady de Ros was of opinion that the first two or three of the series were genuine and the rest fictitious. It was not until after the first edition of this work had been printed that I was given an opportunity of examining the originals, which, together with Miss J's diary have come into the hands of a private collector. Indubitably all the letters are in the Duke's handwriting, most of them being addressed to

Miss A. M. Jenkins,

No. 43, Charlotte St.,

Portland Place, &

a few having been sent to the care of a tradesman in the same street.

convert of a convicted murderer, and persuaded him to make ANN 1833  
full confession before he was taken to the gallows, she conceived that she had a mission to arouse the most prominent public characters to a sense of their sinfulness, and selected the Duke of Wellington as the first subject, without even knowing that he was the conqueror of Napoleon. She wrote to him on 15th January, 1834, and received an answer by return of post, the beginning of a correspondence which, alternating with interviews, lasted till a few months before the Duke's death in 1852. Miss J's letters are full of religious fervour, earnest exhortations to seek salvation, and feminine resentment of the slightest want of ceremony in addressing her. Thus on one occasion she took deep offence because the Duke took to sealing his letters with a plain seal instead of with his coat of arms.

"I take this opportunity," she writes in 1835, "of making two enquiries respecting which my mind is not at all satisfied. The first is: Why am I to receive a change of style in the appearance of your letters with regard to the Seal thereof? and the next, *called forth thereby* Why you ever ceased to sign your Name at the conclusion of your letters. If either of these changes sprang from disrespect or want of confidence in my integrity, confidence, Christianity and friendship, I shall without hesitation or delay return Your Grace every letter I have in my possession, as in that case they will cease to have any value in my estimation. I will also beg to decline all further intercourse, knowing that the sincerity and purity of my friendship merits both consideration and respect."

The Duke's answer to this effusion may be given as an example of the style of his share in the correspondence.

"Strathfieldsaye, September 17, 1835

"MY DEAR MISS J,—I always understood that the important parts of a Letter were its Contents. I never much considered the Signature, provided I knew the handwriting, or the Seal, provided it effectually closed the letter. When I write to a "

Æt 66 Person with whom I am intimate,\* who knows my handwriting, I generally sign my Initials. I don't always seal my own Letters, they are sometimes sealed by a Secretary, oftener by myself. In any Case, as there are generally very many to be sealed, and the Seal frequently becomes heated, it is necessary to change it and by accident I may have sealed a Letter to you with a blank Seal. But it is very extraordinary if it is so, as I don't believe I have such a thing! You will find this Letter however signed and sealed in what you deem the most respectful manner. And if I should write to you any more, I will take care that they shall be properly signed and sealed to your Satisfaction. I am very glad to learn that you intend to send back all the letters I ever wrote to you. I told you heretofore that I thought you had better burn them all. But if you think proper to send them in a parcel to my House, I will save you the trouble of committing them to the flames.

"Believe me, Ever Yours most sincerely,

"WELLINGTON"

And this sort of twaddle went on for the space of seventeen years, for it was all twaddle except the fervid and fanatical exhortations on the lady's part. They were perpetually quarrelling, and as often making it up, till, in the later years, the correspondence became more maternal, and the question of pecuniary assistance came on the carpet. No more tiresome or futile intercourse can be imagined for a man of affairs constantly occupied in the discharge of the highest functions of a subject. The tenour of Miss J's letters can only be gathered from those extracts which she has preserved in her diary for the Duke always scrupulously destroyed all letters of a private nature from ladies. They are made up chiefly of religious lectures and discussions which one would have said were of the very kind to bore the Duke, whose religion was of a somewhat conventional type, to account for his having been at the pains to indite three hundred and ninety epistles to Miss J., one is thrown upon the conclusion that, although

there is a total absence of amatory expressions, he found recreation in intercourse with a pretty young woman of unconventional ways. The whole episode affords a curious psychological study, not without its counterpart in the lives of some other men of note, but it is one upon which it profits not to dwell. It is barely comprehensible when regard is had to the volume of the Duke's daily correspondence. ANN 1833

"The Duke," wrote Lady Salisbury in 1837, "complained to me terribly of the incessant persecution of notes and letters on all subjects from everybody—told me he had written fifty notes or letters that morning, although he had a secretary, an assistant and a librarian. 'I declare that I dread going into my own house, from the heaps of letters that are ready to receive me there. The other morning I had a visit from a man who had made repeated applications to see me on business of importance—a baronet—who has published a pamphlet or two. The interview began with high-flown compliments on his side, which I soon put an end to by saying, 'We did not meet to make compliments. You stated that you had something to say to me'."

"'Yes, my lord,' said the baronet, 'I have a question to put. I wish to ascertain whether, if your Grace were to return to office, you would support principles of moderate reform'."

"'That is your question, is it?'"

"'Yes, my lord'."

"'Then allow me to put a question in return—what right have you to ask me?'" \*

It was not with ladies alone, however, that the Duke was ready to correspond. Postcards, in which the late Mr Gladstone was so amazingly fecund, were not at his disposal, but it is no exaggeration to say that he used up hundred-weights of gilt-edged letter and note-paper in replies on the most trivial subjects, the drafts being duly retained, endorsed, and filed, usually, as in the following case, *in his own handwriting*. Some unknown quack had sent him a box of salves; he replied as follows —

\* Salisbury MSS, 1837



Mr. 69.

"Stratfieldcove, 26th January 1839

"SIR,—I have received your letter and the box of salves, etc., which you have sent me. This last will be returned to you by the coach of Monday. I beg you to accept my best thanks for your attention. I think that you and I have some reason to complain of the Editors of Newspapers. One of them thought proper to publish an account of me, that I was affected by a Rigidity of the Muscles of the Face. You have decided that the disorder must be the *Tic douloureux*, for which you send me your Salves as a remedy. I have no disorder in my face. I am affected by the Lumbago or Rheumatism in my Loins, shoulders, neck and back, a disorder to which many are liable who have passed days and nights exposed to the Weather in bad Climates. I am attended by the best medical Advisers in England and I must attend to their advice. I cannot make use of Salves sent to me by a Gentleman however respectable of whom I know nothing, and who knows nothing of the Case excepting what he reads in the Newspapers. \*

A few more characteristic illustrations may be taken almost at random from the pyramids of manuscripts at Apsley House, where, gazing upon the high desk at which the Duke used to work one is staggered at the evidence of energy sufficient to drive the quill over so many acres of harsh, rough paper and to retain autograph drafts of the most trivial communications. It is well, however to bear in mind the warning contained in one of these letters.

To Lord Mahon.

"September 18th, 1836.

"You are quite right to avoid to publish what you may learn in your Private Correspondence or Private Conversation with anybody. We converse loosely we may say nothing that we do not think, or know to be true. But if I was to think that every Word I ever say or write was to be brought before the Publick, I should hesitate before I dared to write or talk at all,

Apsley House MSS.

and I should take care so to explain myself as that I could not ANN 1833  
be misunderstood "

*To a Clergyman who deplored Roman Catholic Emancipation*

"Walmer Castle, 29 September, 1839

"F M the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr Anderson Everybody has a right to write to the Duke what he pleases, the Duke hopes that he will be permitted to answer or not as he pleases. Mr. Anderson has thought fit to attribute to one cause the state in which the country is at present. The Duke, who is an actor in the affairs of the Day, would attribute these unfortunate circumstances to the conduct of a powerful Party, of which, if the Duke is not mistaken, Mr Anderson is one, to the course which this party followed subsequently to the almost unanimous adoption by Parliament of the measure to which Mr Anderson has referred, and most particularly to the course which many belonging to the same party followed in the course of the years 1830, 1831, and 1832 This is the answer which the Duke has to give to Mr Anderson he had better write to somebody else Before Mr Anderson refers to the authority of Scripture in relation to the Acts for Catholick Emancipation in correspondence with others, the Duke would recommend to him to peruse the Acts of Parliament establishing the Reformation of the Church of England in England and Ireland He will judge for himself whether these in any manner affected the civil privileges of Roman Catholics; whether such privileges were affected till the enactment of the Corporation and Test Acts in the reign of Charles II, whether the authors of these Acts, the founders of the Church and its doctrines, left for two centuries in existence and in exercise privileges forbidden by the word of God "

„ *Ordering a Pair of Post-horses*

"Stratfieldsaye, November 24, 1846

"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn The Duke has been invited to Arundel Castle during the period of the visit of H.M ,

Æt 78. the Queen to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk. He will arrive at Arundel by the Rail Road on Tuesday the 1st of December by the train which will quit the Station London Bridge at eleven a.m. and reach the Station Arundel at 1.39. He will bring his Carriage with him, and he requests the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn to give orders, and if necessary to take Measures, that he may find a pair of Horses at the Arundel Station at half-past one on Tuesday the 1st of December to draw his Carriage from thence to the Castle.

"The Duke will have with him two Saddle Horses, and he requests the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn to give orders that Stabling may be ready for them at the Norfolk Arms if possible if not, in the Town in the immediate Neighbourhood.

"If the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn should have occasion to write to the Duke of Wellington, it is requested that he will address the letter to Piccadilly, London.

*Endorsed—* To the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn, Arundel, desiring him to have a pair of horses to take the Carriage to the Castle." \*

*To one who asked the Duke for a Certificate of Respectability*

London, July 21 1847

"P.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr Oliver. He declares distinctly that he knows nothing of Mr Edward Oliver and that he is astonished at the Insolence of any person requiring him to certify to Messrs. Coutts and Co., or any other person, that of which the person who makes the requisition must know that the Duke has no personal knowledge.

*To a Washerwoman.*

"London, September 1 1848.

"The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mrs. Herrick. His son, the Marquis of Douro, is a 'housekeeper in Belgrave Street. He is not responsible for the payment of his

\* The whole of this, including the endorsement, is in the Duke's own hand.

washing bills, even to the wife of a soldier. It appears to the Duke that the regular mode of proceeding would be to apply to the debtor himself, and, if payment should be refused or omitted, to enforce the same by all means sanctioned by law. This would be a regular mode of proceeding. That adopted is *impertinent*, in the real and not offensive meaning of that word " — MAY 1833

*To a Lady who sent a Box to Apsley House*

"Walmer Castle, 3rd November, 1819

"Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Miss Jane Fyffe. He has this morning received in a deal box her letter of 3rd October. He has long been under the necessity of preventing his house being made the deposit of all the trash that is manufactured or made up. Giving money is one thing—receiving into his house all the trash made up is quite a different one! To the latter he will not submit. He invariably returns everything sent to his house without his previous permission, if he can discover the mode of doing so. But there is no direct communication between this place and Edinburgh. The deal case was brought down here from the Duke's house in London, the Duke is ignorant in what manner. He desires Miss — to inform him in what manner it is to be returned to Edinburgh. He gives notice that if he does not receive an answer by return of post, the box and its contents will be thrown into the fire. He will not allow things to be sent to his house without his previous consent."

In his later years the Duke had a variety of forms of refusal lithographed in facsimile from his own handwriting, for such purposes as declining invitations to dinners and parties, declining to give orders to the gallery of the House of Lords or to send an autograph signature, and, especially, explaining the limitation of his patronage as Commander-in-chief.

In his last years his handwriting became almost illegible, so much so that in 1852, when Lord Derby, then in office,

At 63. — received a letter from the Duke which no one in Downing Street could decipher he sent his private secretary Colonel Talbot, to ask the Duke to explain his own letter. The Duke took it, looked at it, and handing it back to Colonel Talbot observed with a smile, "It was my business to write that letter, but it is your duty to read it!"

Returning to the year 1833—for the ordinary incidents and social obligations of political life the Duke at this time felt a strong disinclination all the more marked because he was usually so conscientious in meeting them.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Marchioness of Salisbury*

"S.B., March 23th, 1833.

"MY DEAR LADY SALISBURY,—I have received your note about dining with the Lord Mayor, which is a ceremony which I confess that I am anxious to avoid unless you wish it very much. I wish to avoid for three reasons. First, I think that all in the City Conservatives\* as well as the others, behaved most shamefully to me in the year 1830 on the occasion of the King's intended visit to the City. I then determined that I would not go again either to the Mansion House or to dine at the Guildhall. Secondly I am very anxious to avoid to meet the Ministers anywhere, but particularly in the City at the Lord Mayor's, where they must be toasted, applauded etc., etc. Thirdly, it is not quite clear to me that if the Ministers knew as they must, that I intended to be present, they would not favour me by having a mob ready to receive me on arriving at or going away from, the Mansion House, as Mr Canning's Government had on one occasion that I attended a dinner given by the East India Company when he was present. My own inclination, therefore, would induce me not to go"†

It is rather lamentable to find the Duke entertaining suspicion that English Ministers and gentlemen would stoop

\* The earliest example which I have noted of the use by the Duke of the modern term for what remained of the Tory party

† *Salisbury MSS.*

to wrest the Lord Mayor's hospitality into the occasion for a hostile demonstration against a political opponent, but this was not the only symptom of how much his spirit had been embittered and his judgment warped by resentment against the authors of the legislative revolution. Unhappily, he allowed his resentment to extend to some who deserved censure from him least of all.

Early in 1834 the Chancellorship of the University of Oxford became vacant through the death of Lord Glenville, and the Conservatives of the University approached the Duke with the view of inducing him to consent to be put in nomination. He told them that he "knew no more of Greek and Latin than an Eton boy in the remove, that these facts were perfectly well known, and that he must be considered incapable and unfit,"\* and he urged them to look elsewhere, naming the Duke of Beaufort and the Lords Bathurst, Mansfield, Sidmouth, and Talbot. Yielding, however, to the urgent pressure of his proposers, the Duke consented to be put forward, considering himself "in all instances of this kind an instrument to be used by the public"†. Meanwhile another party in Convocation had invited Sir Robert Peel to allow his nomination, and Mr Hayward Cox wrote to the Duke suggesting that it would be a gracious act if he were to withdraw in favour of his colleague, who, by his conscientious action at the time of the Roman Catholic legislation, had lost his seat for the University. The Duke replied, declining to withdraw on the ground that the appeal had come too late, and that it would be unfair to the gentlemen who, at his request, had first reconsidered, and then repeated, their invitation to himself.

Accordingly, the Duke was installed as Chancellor of the University on 10th June. With Croker, who accompanied him, he stipulated for an avoidance of display.

\* *Apsley House MSS*

† *Ibid*

Estrangement between the Duke and Sir R Peel.

Æt 61 "I intend to send a footman and coachman and horses to Oxford, but as for a magnificent entry, etc., I must enter that city as I have always entered that and others—as an individual. \*

"I could not make the Duke," Croker wrote to his wife, "take off his hat to any one, not even the ladies, he kept saluting like a soldier. I, however, made him show himself occasionally, and take notice here and there, but he is a sad hand at popularity hunting.

Mr Arnould repeated some very good verses on the Hospice of St Bernard, and, after alluding to Buonaparte's passage of the Alps, and praising his genius, etc., and recounting all his triumphs, he suddenly apostrophised the Duke, and said something equivalent to—"Invincible till he met you! At that word began a scene of enthusiasm such as I never saw, some people appeared to me to go out of their senses—literally to go mad. The whole assembly started up, and the ladies and grave semicircle of doctors became as much excited as the boys in the gallery and the men in the pit. Such peals of shouts I never heard such waving of hats, handkerchiefs and caps I never saw; such extravagant clapping and stamping so that at last the air became clouded with dust. During all this the Duke sat like a statue, at last he took some notice, took off his cap lightly and pointed to the reciter to go on, but this only increased the enthusiasm, and at last it ended only from the exhaustion of our animal powers." †

Now it may easily be believed how little, the Duke, loaded already with all the honours which human ingenuity has devised to indicate human gratitude, coveted for himself the honorary office of Chancellor, nevertheless Peel was deeply hurt that the Duke, in suggesting the names of others, should not have mentioned him as one who had deserved well of the University.‡ He was not aware, as appears from an unpublished letter from the Duke to Lord Aberdeen, that the Duke "had done everything in his power to prevail

Croker ii. 225.

† *Ibid.*, 228.

‡ Peel was afterwards informed by Sir Henry Hardinge that the Duke had been urging Mr. Wintle to force the office upon you (Peel) by a suggestion of all parties; but the Duke was informed that a peer was indispensable.

on them to take Sir Robert Peel,"\* but in vain. Peel ANN 1834 therefore withdrew, and the Duke was unanimously elected. Such a tittle as this would never have disturbed the intercourse of men who were on confidential terms, but such, unhappily, no longer prevailed between the two leaders of the Opposition.

"Peel complains," wrote Lady Salisbury in her journal, "that he has asked the Duke three years running to Drayton, but he has never been asked to Strathfieldsaye. There certainly never were two men less fitted to go on well together in the intercourse of private life. The only way to deal with the Duke is by perfect openness and candour, and Peel is always stiff, reserved, and unfathomable" †

"Why won't you go to Drayton?" asked Lady Salisbury

"Ah, that is the way!" returned the Duke "Why does the Duke not do this, and why does the Duke not do that? It is very hard if the Duke is to be the only man who may not do as he likes" ‡

On another occasion Lady Salisbury, after listening to some complaint by the Duke about Peel's tiresome ways, remarked, "Never mind; he is a thoroughly honest man and devoted to you"

"In the first position, you are quite right," replied the Duke—"he is thoroughly honest. I never saw a man who adhered more invariably to truth on all occasions. As to the second, I have my doubts of that" §

It was one of the Duke's peculiarities that he was very slow—unconquerably slow—to change an opinion he had once formed. It was the work of years to convince him that he had been mistaken in his original belief that Peel disliked him. On 1st May, 1834, they met at dinner, at Mr

\* *Apsey House MSS.*

† *Salisbury MSS, 1836*

‡ *Ibid*

§ *Ibid*



ÆT 65 — Arbutnots and their host was so struck by the absence of the old cordiality between them and so apprehensive that an open rupture was imminent that he wrote to express his anxiety to Lord Aberdeen, as the only man able to set matters right

I know not which of the two is in fault. Perhaps there is no fault on either side, merely misconception. The Duke, I know, imagines that Peel does not like him. In this I am sure he is in error. If there is one subject upon which, when I was seeing Peel daily he spoke to me more than upon all others, it was in praise and admiration of the Duke. It seems therefore to me that the one thing wanted is that they should understand each other "•

Now Lord Aberdeen was equally friends with the Duke and Sir Robert and it is significant that, instead of going straight to the Duke, who was in the habit of grumbling to him confidentially about Peel he forwarded Arbutnots letter to Peel. The fact is that the Duke was rather an impracticable person in delicate negotiations, he was so impatient of any want—not of sincerity for he always gave Peel the utmost credit for absolute truthfulness—but of frankness of manner and directness of expression, that his friends found it difficult to induce him to use those little attentions and considerations which do so much to make intercourse run smoothly. Aberdeen found that chief among two or three other causes for Peel's soreness was the remembrance of Wellington's words when, in 1832, he had been explaining to the Lords his action and motives in endeavouring to form a Ministry which Peel had refused to join. They certainly were barbed expressions, and it is not surprising that they rankled in a spirit so sensitive as Peel's.

'For myself, my Lords, I cannot help feeling that if I had been capable of refusing my assistance to his Majesty if I had

been capable of saying to his Majesty—‘I cannot assist you in ANN 1834.  
this affair,’ I do not think, my Lords, that I could have shown — -  
my face in the streets for shame of having done it, for shame of  
having abandoned my Sovereign under such distressing circum-  
stances. I have indeed the misfortune of differing from friends  
of mine upon this subject, but I cannot regret the steps I have  
taken.”

The faithful Arbuthnot did not relax his efforts to bring about a reconciliation. He was determined to remove the misunderstanding between these men, not only from the deep admiration and affection in which he held them, but because he looked upon them as essential to the welfare of the country. The Ministry was crumbling to pieces; were it to fall, it were lamentable that there should exist anything short of the fullest confidence between Wellington and Peel. To Peel, therefore, Arbuthnot wrote on 12th May—

“The Duke told me yesterday that he had met Hardinge, and that he said to him that things were in that state which might make it necessary for you to make up your mind at a moment’s warning what course you would pursue. I don’t think he said much more. . . except that the Minister must be in the House of Commons. . . Supposing that the King had to form a new Government, I should hope that he would send for you and the Duke at the same time. The Duke would represent the absolute necessity of having the Minister in the House of Commons, and he would exert himself most strenuously in aiding you to form a Government. It would then be settled between you what share in it he was to take, but I know that his object is the Horse Guards.” \*

The misunderstanding and coldness, however, were not so easily removed. It endured for years, despite the closer relations into which political changes brought the Duke and Sir Robert, and although Arbuthnot, Croker, Lady Salisbury,

Arbuthnot's, and their host was so struck by the absence of the old cordiality between them and so apprehensive that an open rupture was imminent, that he wrote to express his anxiety to Lord Aberdeen, as the only man able to set matters right.

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MRS. ABBOTT  
(From a Miniature at Wyby House)

[Vol. 1, p. 25]

Mr 63 — what is more curious, has contrived to retain that of a host of followers." \*

Death of Mr. Arbuthnot — The political convulsion anticipated as immediate by the Duke and Mr. Arbuthnot was postponed for a few months, and before it came about the Duke was fated to sustain a severe loss in the death of Mrs. Arbuthnot, one of his few intimate friends. Gossips loved to point an inquisitive finger at this friendship which began when the Arbuthnots were in Paris after the peace of 1815, and in whatever degree of indiscretion the acquaintance may have had its rise, it had ripened with years into a friendship very dear to the Duke. He was at Hatfield when the news came and Lady Salisbury has described the scene in her journal.

August 2nd, 1834 — "Lord S. came down with Lds. Ellenborough and Rosalyn, the Clanwilliams and the G. Somersets. They had a splendid division last night in the Lords on the Admission of Dissenters Bill—majority 102—greater than any division of the Opposition in this century. At least this, I trust will put swamping the H. of Peers out of the question. The Duke came down to dinner in high spirits. He told us Arbuthnot had been ill at Woodford with an attack of nature of cholera—but was better. I had just gone to bed, the other ladies, when an express arrived to the D. with intelligence of Mrs. Arbuthnot's death. He threw himself the greatest agitation on the sofa, as Ld. S. told me, an letter on the floor, and then rose and walked a few mi about the room almost sobbing after which he retired. In morning Lord S. got a note from him, saying he must go to Arbuthnot, he left for Woodford about half past eight Sunday morning. It is a dreadful loss to him for who there is any foundation or not for the stories usually bell about the early part of their *liaison*, she was certainly now be to him no more than a tried and valued friend, to whom he sincerely attached. Her house was his home and with all glory and greatness, he never had a home. His nature, is domi



THE ASSISTANT  
JAMES J. JONES, JR. 1907







## CHAPTER X.

### AFTER THE STORM.

1834-1839

	1831.	Gloomy apprehensions of the Tories.	September	Renewal of coldness between the Duke and Peel.
July		Resignation of Lord Grey		
November 12		Fall of the Melbourne Ministry	June 20 1837	Death of William IV 1837-8. The Duke's forbearance in Opposition.
" 15		The King sends for the Duke of Wellington.	January 1838.	The Canadian Rebellion.
		The Duke becomes First Lord of the Treasury, Home, Foreign, and Colonial Secretary	June 28	Coronation of Queen Victoria.
		Lord Stanley declines office.	May 1839.	Resignation of Lord Melbourne.
		Sir R. Peel's first Cabinet.		The Queen sends for the Duke of Wellington.
April	1835.	Defeat and resignation of Ministers.		Who recommends her Majesty to lay her commands on Sir Robert Peel.
		The Duke's relations with his party		The Bedchamber difficulty.
		Reapproachement of Canningites and Moderate Tories.	October 15	Death of Lady Salisbury
		Municipal Corporations Bill.	November 18	Sudden illness of the Duke.

Gloomy apprehensions of the Tories.

THE old order was changing fast, in the Duke of Wellington's opinion it was passing away altogether. His apprehensions continued of the gloomiest.

"I think," said hesto Lady Salisbury, "that persons of property Ans 1831  
 in this country are coming to their senses, but while the Reform  
 Act is in force they have no influence. Formerly there were  
 certain places given up to the democratic interest, and it was  
 very proper, in a constitution like ours, that there should be such;  
 the rest were in the hands of the property of the country. But  
 the Act has brought home democracy to every man's door. I  
 doubt whether, even if the Reform Act were repealed,\* the  
 country could again enjoy its ancient constitution without further  
 changes. The House of Commons has of late swallowed up all  
 the power of the State; the rotten boroughs moderated this  
 power by the infusion of aristocratic influence, to restore them  
 would be impossible. It remains to be considered in what manner  
 to re-establish the ancient balance, whether by giving to the  
 House of Lords more power by controlling the money bills and  
 so on, or by giving the King a real and effectual veto. If there  
 were a revolution in this country, it must end by a military  
 dictator, I am too old, but there would be one" †

The Duke was not alone in anticipating a violent revolution, his apprehensions were shared by some of the Whigs. On hearing that the Duke of Bedford had declared that, in his opinion, the choice lay between despotism and anarchy, the Duke remarked, "I can tell Johnny Bedford that if we have anarchy, I'll have Woburn!" ‡

Bitterly as he disapproved of Lord Grey's policy, still his Cabinet was the King's Government, and Wellington could not be induced by Buckingham, Londonderry, and the other Tory *frondeurs* to offer any factious opposition to their measures. Least of all was he disposed to take issue with them upon the new Poor Law.

\* It is a singular thing that, as shown by many expressions in the Duke's letters at this time, he contemplated partial repeal of the Reform Act as a possible and desirable thing.

† Salisbury MSS, 1834

Æt 63.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Marquess of Londonderry*

"17 June, 1834.

The Tory  
Friends.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,— In the last session of Parliament I fought several fair stand-up fights throughout the Dog Days and till the end of August, with the support of not more than a dozen Peers, upon questions of the greatest Publick and personal interest, even to the Duke of Buckingham himself, but I do not recollect that I had the Advantage of the Duke's support on any one of these occasions. I decline to make the Poor Law Bill a Party Question, or to oppose any provision in it of which, when I see it, I shall approve. I do not choose to be the Person to excite a quarrel between the two Houses of Parl: This quarrel will occur in its Time, and the House of Lords will probably be overwhelmed. But it shall not be owing to any action of mine."

"London, June 19 1834.

"If I am to carry on a Warfare with the D of Buckingham by Letter he must write Legibly I can scarcely read one Word of his Letter Indeed not one Word beyond the first Page.

"In answer to that Page I assert that I was left almost alone to fight the Battle in the House of Lords in the last Session of Parl: We consequently lost many Questions. To talk of my being Leader of a Party or anything but the Slave of a Party or in other Words the Person whom any other may bore with his Letters or his Visits upon publick Subjects, when he pleases, is just what I call *Stuff*" "

During the summer of 1834 Lord Grey's Ministry staggered on under increasing difficulties Their popularity out-of doors suffered from the disappointment of those who had imagined that all kinds of benefits would immediately flow from the establishment of a people's Parliament. They were at issue among themselves on the proposals for dealing with the revenues of the Irish Church, which brought about in May the resignation of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon,

Sir James Graham,\* and Mr. Stanley.\* Grey himself was ANN 1834.  
only restrained from retiring at the same time by the remon-  
strance of Brougham, he did resign in July, and was suc-  
ceeded as Prime Minister by Lord Melbourne, Parliament  
being prorogued at the same time

Lord Melbourne accepted office, relying chiefly on Lord Fall of the  
Althorpe's influence as leader of the House of Commons, † Melbourne  
but on the death of his father, Earl Spencer, on 10th Ministry  
November, Althorpe went to the House of Lords, and Lord  
Melbourne, feeling that the position was seriously modified,  
asked the King whether it was his pleasure that he "should  
attempt to make such fresh arrangements as might enable  
his Majesty's present servants to continue to conduct the  
affairs of the country, or whether his Majesty deems it  
advisable to adopt any other course" It has usually been  
understood that the King dismissed his Ministers on this  
occasion by the exercise of his prerogative, ‡ but the above  
extract from Lord Melbourne's letter to the King on 12th  
November shows that, technically, he placed his resignation  
in his Majesty's hands In his reply the King replied that,  
• looking to the effect on the strength of Ministers of the with-  
drawal of Lord Althorpe from the House of Commons, and  
also to the division of opinion in the Cabinet on the question  
of the Irish Church, "he did not think he would be acting  
fairly or honourably by his Lordship if he called upon him  
for the continuance of his services in a position of which the  
tenure appeared to the King so precarious." The dismissal  
by the King of his Ministers, for such it was in effect, § gave  
rise to a situation wholly without parallel Melbourne, after

\* Became Lord Stanley on the death of his grandfather, the twelfth Earl of Derby, 21st October, 1834.

† See Melbourne's letter to the King (*Peel Letters*, II 253)

‡ Brougham industriously circulated the unfounded report that the Ministry had been dismissed as the result of an intrigue between the Tories and the Queen

§ And so the King believed it to be, avowing it as "his own" immediate and exclusive act" in a subsequent letter to Sir Robert Peel (*Peel Letters*, II 288)

At 65 the Duke of Wellington was the person who received the first mark of the King's confidence "must stamp upon the Administration about to be formed the impress of his name and principles. Lord Stanley was mistaken in supposing that the Duke had any ulterior views about the conduct of the Government. Misunderstandings between him and Peel there certainly had been and were to be, but nothing can have been more complete than the Duke's loyal deference to Peel, and his resolve that the Administration should be Peel's and no other

"It is impossible," wrote Mr Dawson to Sir Robert before his return to England, "to praise too highly the delicate chivalry of the Duke towards you. I dined with him on Wednesday, and he told me that he should take no step, that he should not utter an opinion until your arrival that he looked upon you as the only man to steer the country through its difficulties that he occupied his present position solely to resign it in the fullest way to you, and that on your arrival you should not find one single thing done to fetter your judgment." \*

Indeed, the Duke's action in this crisis—his perfect loyalty to the absent Peel and his discretion in recognising the limitations of his own power as shown by his failure to form a Ministry in 1832—affords one of the best features in his whole political career

That Stanley and his friends, representing the moderate Reformers or Liberal-Conservatives, should hold aloof was a keen disappointment to Peel. "It will be the Duke's old Cabinet over again," he said querulously to Mr Croker † and so it was in effect, with Lyndhurst on the Woolsack, Aberdeen at the Colonial Office Goulbourne Home Secretary and Hardinge Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Peel's first  
Cabinet.

Lord Stanley's apprehensions, however, that the policy of the new Cabinet would be high-and-dry Tory were soon dispelled by a manifesto issued by Peel, with the approval of



THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN RUSSELL, BART.

(After a Painting by Sir Martin Sheppard, 1840)



his colleagues,\* to the electors of Tamworth, in which the 1832 Reform Act was referred to as "a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question," and a programme of economy, of deliberate and dispassionate reform of every institution which stood in need of it, and of steady redress of grievances. Immediately upon this Parliament was dissolved, but although the Ministerialists, who could only reckon 150 votes in the first reformed Parliament, came back greatly reinforced, they still formed but a minority of the House of Commons.

A characteristic letter from Benjamin Disraeli explained to the Duke his view of the causes for his defeat in the contest for High Wycombe.

"I have fought our battle and I have lost it by a majority of fourteen. . . . Had Lord Carrington exerted himself even in the slightest degree in my favour, I must have been returned. But he certainly maintained a *neutrality*—a neutrality, so strict that it amounted to a blockade . . . Grey made a violent anti-ministerial speech, and I annihilated him in my reply, but what use is annihilating men out of the House of Commons? . . . I am now a cipher, but if the devotion of my energies to your cause, in and out, can ever avail you, your Grace may count upon me, who seeks no greater satisfaction than that of serving a really great man."†

The life of the Ministry was short and troubled. Beaten on the election of a Speaker and again on the Address, Peel persevered‡ until he had sustained six defeats in the

\* Mr Walpole speaks of the Tamworth manifesto as if it had been a disagreeable surprise to the Tory Cabinet (*History of England*, III. 251). We have, however, Peel's own assurance that he submitted the draft to his colleagues, and that it had their approval (*Peel Memoirs*, II. 58).

† *Apsley House MSS*

‡ The Duke strongly urged Peel not to give up. "I should not be your friend," he wrote, "if I did not advise you and entreat you not to give up. Your retaining your position becomes wholly impossible. A man cannot signify much either way, in any case."



*Æt* 65. Commons, the last of which happened in April, when Ministers were in a minority of 27 on Lord John Russell's resolution for dealing with the surplus revenues of the Irish Church. While the debate was in progress the Duke was entertaining the Austrian Ambassador at dinner at Apsley House. Lord Lyndhurst offered to send early information of the result of the division.

Defeat and  
resigna-  
tion of  
Ministers.

"I am quite satisfied," said the Duke, "to have it when the newspapers come in at ten o'clock. If I could do any good by having it earlier I would, but as I can't, I'd just as soon wait."

You always take things coolly" interposed Lady Salisbury "I suppose you never lie awake with anxiety?"

No replied the Duke, "I don't like lying awake, it does no good. I make a point never to lie awake." \*

The first attempt at a Conservative Administration had failed, but Conservatism, as expounded by Peel, had commanded such wide sympathy that thoughtful people began to recognise in it the policy of the future. Only among the Old Tories was there rending of garments. In the Duke of Wellington, despite his abandonment of them on "Roman Catholic Relief and, ineffectively on Reform, they had still recognised their brightest hopes of resisting further changes, though they never regarded him as a good "party man," but now the Duke had gone in scot and lot with the new fangled Conservatism.

The Duke's  
relations  
with his  
party

'The Duke,' notes Lady Salisbury, 'has certainly a nervous horror of the annoyances he endures from the ultra-Tories, far greater than any he feels of the Radicals. He told me he was convinced we should soon see a new party formed in the House of Lords, consisting of Lords Brougham and Londonderry and the Duke of Buckingham. †

character, and to the contentment of those who have supported you; and I earnestly recommend you to bear with the evils of your position, till the Conviction will be general that you cannot longer maintain it."

Salisbury MSS., 1833.

† 1842.

There was a wild<sup>1</sup> project of overthrowing the Government ANN 1835 by an adverse motion in the House of Lords which elicited from the Duke the following memorandum addressed to the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Marquess of Londonderry.—

"May 5, 1835

" . The House of Lords is now in a position very different from that in which it stood previous to the Reform Bill. The effect of that measure has been to exclude the influence of the Crown, of the members of the H of Lords, and of property in general in the Election of Members of the H of Commons . The consequence is that the H of Lords have no influence over the proceedings of the Government, or of the H of Commons. Indeed, in the last, the influence of the House of Lords is considered very much in the same light as the influence of the Master is over his emancipated slaves It is sufficient for the H of Lords to approve of and recommend a measure to induce the H of Commons to reject it But it must be observed that the H of Lords still possesses constitutionally great power over the Legislature of the Country, in the exercise of which it will be supported by the Country, and which it ought to exercise with diligence, with wisdom, and discretion It must not be supposed, however, that this power will be left in the hands of the Peers, or that they will be allowed to exercise it with independence<sup>2</sup> (in other words, that they will not be swamped) if they exercise it lightly and without deliberation, or if they should render their House contemptible by interfering in discussions in the H of Commons and in measures not in a legislative form, and not regularly before them, or in the details of the administration of the Govt, over which it must be obvious that they can have no control, as they have none over the Finances of the State I recommend these few observations to the attention of the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Marquis of Londonderry I cannot hope that they will induce<sup>3</sup> them to alter their course They contain the reasons for my own

"W."\*

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

Art. 60.  
 Rapprochement  
 between Can-  
 ningites  
 and Peel-  
 ites.  
 Municipal  
 Corpora-  
 tions Bill.

The estrangement of the Old Tories<sup>1</sup> was balanced by a<sup>2</sup> decided *rapprochement* between the Canningites—the Liberal Conservatives under Stanley—and the regular Opposition—the Peelites as they may be called by anticipation—under Peel and Wellington. The principal measure before Parliament in 1835 was one dealing with the reform of municipal corporations, a subject which roused passions almost as intense and apprehensions almost as gloomy as those excited by parliamentary reform. The Duke, despite the advance in his views which had so much dismayed the Old Tories, detected grave dangers in the proposals of the Government.

"The worst of the Corporation Bill," said he, "is that it will form a little republic in every town, possessing the power of raising money. In case of anything like a civil war, these would be very formidable instruments in the hands of the democratic party. Charles I. was ruined by the money levied by the City of London." \*

It almost seems as if it required familiarity with the steam engine, not yet universally known, to awaken the minds of the most practised and thoughtful politicians to the beneficent action of the safety valve. The Duke, even after the reassuring result of the second general election under the Reform Act, could discern security to the State and its institutions only in centralisation of power and political action. Peel was gifted with greater prescience. He had hung back at a time when Wellington was prepared to go forward in the path of reform, but once entered upon, he saw that the path must be followed. He had assisted the Corporation Bill in the Commons, confining his opposition to certain important points, but his influence over its fate ceased with its entry into the House of Lords, and, led by Lyndhurst, the Tories played sad havoc with its provisions, and a collision between the two houses seemed inevitable. A compromise, however, was effected in September the Duke

cordially co-operating with Peel to save the measure of which, Ann 1835  
privately, he entertained so much disapprobation

Nevertheless the friends of both leaders were distressed to perceive a return of that estrangement between them, which had prevailed before the formation of the Administration of 1834. When the Duke asked Peel's advice about the best means of dealing with the Corporation Bill in the Lords, Peel duly replied that "the Lords must do as they pleased," and left London without giving notice to the Duke of his intentions\*. Indeed, communications entirely ceased between the two colleagues, although Sir Robert continued to express his views on the Bill to Hardinge and others. The Duke was deeply offended and hurt, and it was chiefly the incessant good offices of Lady Salisbury with the Duke and those of Mr. Ashurst with Peel, through Sir Henry Hardinge, that a good understanding was eventually restored, never again to be seriously shaken.

Renewed  
coldness  
between  
the Duke  
and Peel.

"I could not help," wrote Lady Salisbury, "expressing to Sir Henry Hardinge my concern and disappointment at Peel's conduct, which must end in utter ruin to the Monarchy, and I particularly urged Sir Henry to induce Peel, if possible, to alter his *manière d'être* with the Duke, and treat him with more confidence and cordiality. 'The truth is,' said Sir Henry, 'that Peel has no respect for any man's opinion but the Duke's, for whom he has the highest possible veneration. When one speaks to him, he meets one with such a flow of words, and such knock-me-down arguments, it is impossible to reply. When he knows his opinions are contrary to those of the Duke, he avoids coming into collision with him, and will not enter into the subject personally, but transmits it through a third person. That is the reason of his apparent reserve. It is a mixture of habitual reverence for the Duke and obstinacy and *mauvaise honte*.'"

"Next day the Duke came to me. I repeated to him what Sir Henry had told me of Peel's high respect for him and dislike

\* Salisbury MSS, 1834

— *Mr 66.* of coming into direct collision with his opinions. He listened with great attention, and made no answer " <sup>b</sup>

Neither Wellington nor Peel were deficient in common sense, the representations of their friends had a more felicitous effect than sometimes rewards the exertions of the best intentioned persons and by the beginning of 1836 the friendly relations of country gentlemen were restored between them.

"I shall certainly be at Drayton on Wednesday" wrote the Duke to Sir Robert on 18th January, 1836 "I will send Jonathan down to-morrow and I will bring my red coat, and be prepared to do whatever you please. In respect to business, the few words that passed between us already show that we are of the same opinion as to the course to be pursued in Parliament." <sup>†</sup>

The Duke wrote to Lady Salisbury after this visit—

"Upon the whole, between ourselves, I think him (Peel) disposed to act more rationally than I have ever known him before. I conducted myself towards him as I always have done, with unaffected good temper and cordiality " <sup>‡</sup>

And thus ended a disagreement between two men whose concord was of so great importance to their country at a time when the classes and masses were settling, not without friction which might have engendered conflagration, into new relations with each other. It is agreeable to read the close and constant correspondence which arose out of their joint conduct of the opposition, there was now no longer any frigid "The Lords must do as they please," nor testy references by the Duke to the vacillation of "that fellow in the House of Commons " but close co-operation in restraining, on the one hand, the extreme members of their own party and resisting resolutely the most objectionable measures of the other.

*Salisbury MSS.*, 1833

<sup>†</sup> *Peel Letters*, ii. 321.

<sup>‡</sup> *Salisbury MSS.*, 1836.

Lord Melbourne's Ministry was placed between a vigilant ANN 1837.  
Opposition and an unruly Radical "tail."

*The Duke of Wellington to Sir Robert Peel.*

" 23rd March, 1837

" . Is not the probable resignation of the Government the great question of the day? It is obvious that they are surrounded by difficulties, abroad and at home, in colonies and everywhere Their resignation is a great misfortune, but I cannot doubt that it will take place How does the expectation of this event affect the question under consideration? It is very desirable that the public should understand clearly what the difference of opinion between the two parties is—that you are determined to uphold the Protestant religion, the Church of England in Ireland as well as in England, that you are determined to maintain the independence of the House of Lords I think that a debate upon the third reading might bring out these points very forcibly, and that men might be induced to look a little further than the mere question of the municipal administration of towns which are bankrupt in property I shall be satisfied with whatever course you may decide upon I may have a little more or less facility by your adopting one or the other, but in the consideration of the great interests involved in the decision, such trifles must be laid out of the question " \*

The "great misfortune" was averted by an unforeseen event Chief among Lord Melbourne's difficulties was the intense dislike which the King had conceived against, and took no pains to conceal from, his Whig servants On 20th June took place what Spencer Walpole unkindly terms the most important political circumstance in the life of William IV, namely, his death With the new monarch Melbourne at once found himself on a very different footing, both personally and politically, for, the Princess Victoria was fond of Lord Melbourne as a friend, and had been sedulously educated in

Death of  
William  
IV

Æt 68. Whig principles by her mother, the Duchess of Kent. It is curious to note, considering what the Duke's relations with his Queen became in after years that almost the first public act of her Majesty met with his disapproval. A royal review was to be held in July at which the young Queen made up her mind to appear on horseback, in spite of the remonstrance of her Ministers. Somebody to whom the Duke imparted, bluntly enough, his objection to what he regarded as a piece of theatrical display, conveyed what he said straight to her Majesty but this did not in the least affect her resolve. The Duke had misgivings about the Queen's horsemanship which proved to be groundless. "Much better come in her carriage," he said grimly to Lady Salisbury "I would not wish a better subject for a caricature than this young Queen, alone, without any woman to attend her without the brilliant cortège of young men and ladies as ought to appear in a scene of that kind, and surrounded only by such youths as Lord Hill and me, Lord Albemarle and the Duke of Argyll! And if it rains and she gets wet, or if any other *contretemps* happens, what is to be done? All these things sound very little but they must be considered in a display of that sort. As to the soldiers, I know *them* they won't care about it one sixpence.\* It is a childish fancy because she has read of Queen Elizabeth at Tilbury Fort but *then* there was threat of foreign invasion, which was an occasion calling for display, what occasion is there now?"†

Much occasion, as the Duke himself lived to realise. The nation was just awaking to political life. This act of the Queen was the first in a long series of gracious appearances which were to endear her to her people in a degree never attained by any preceding British monarch—the initial step in a reign, of which the character has done more than all the precautions of politicians to avert the dangers which the

\* Either the Duke was mistaken, or the British soldier has changed his character in the last sixty years.

† Salisbury MSS 1837.

Duke foresaw, and which undoubtedly were impending over the ancient institutions of the country \* AUG 1837

Lord Melbourne's moderation and the irritation it occasioned among his Radical followers, not unnaturally suggested the expediency of a coalition between parties. The Duke recognised no merit in the idea

*The Duke of Wellington to Lady Burghersh*

"Walmer Castle, 31st August, 1837

"There is nearly an equality of Members in Parliament, which renders the House of Commons a Curiosity as a deliberative assembly, and the management of which by what is called Government must be found hereafter, as it has been lately, impracticable. Then comes your Gentleman from the moon who says you must have a fusion—a junction—a Coalition of Parties. That is the remedy. He may give it what name he pleases, it will be a *Coalition*! will be so called, and detested accordingly! This difficulty would be sufficient. But is there no other? Since the great coalition of 1782-3 we have had others. The great Whig Leaders joined Mr Pitt in 1791 in support of his Anti-Revolutionary Policy in the French war. They had supported him long before they coalesced with him in Government. He was strong, and did not depend on their Support. Mr. Canning made a sort of Coalition with the Whigs and he died; but if he had lived, he could not have gone on. The truth is that *Coalitions* have a bad name! Everybody on all sides must be against them, that does not profit by them excepting the very small numbers indeed who sometimes think of the *Interêt de la Chose*! But it is said that after my declaration there can be no difference of opinion. My declaration was neither more nor less than the application to a particular set of Questions of the Principle on which I have been acting for years. But there is a great distance between my declaration and a general concurrence

\* Nor of this country alone. It was wisely observed by Lord Rosebery on a recent occasion (1899) that the example of Queen Victoria as a constitutional ruler has had an influence far beyond these shores in reconciling European nations to monarchy as a form of government.



Æt. 68. of opinions, much more a Coalition founded upon the existence of such agreement. It is my opinion that the only chance that any Government has in England in these times is to take a very moderate course, and to take its chance of support from the moderate men of all sides, if there are any such.\*

The Duke's political faith.

The above letter were there no other testimony in existence, were sufficient refutation of the prevalent idea that the Duke was a cut-and-dried Tory. The truth is that, while he welcomed some reforms such as Roman Catholic Emancipation, he hated and dreaded others, such as parliamentary reform and the abolition of the corn laws, and only yielded when he recognised, as the bulk of his party did not, that the forces behind them were irresistible, and, if longer resisted, would, by the accumulation of energy sweep away a great deal that might and ought to be preserved. He has been denounced by Reformers as an impracticable Tory—by Tories as a mere Opportunist. In fact, he was neither. An Opportunist is one who will adopt the policy of the majority of the moment, in order to keep his party or himself in power. The Duke had no party and was absolutely indifferent to and independent of office. But he was strongly convinced that the security of Crown and country were involved in keeping the Radicals out of office, and, in order to do that, he was prepared to accept and even to promote—he did accept and promote—measures which as a Tory he detested. He was a Possiblist—if a new term may be coined—rather than an Opportunist; prepared to resist change as long as possible, but to give way rather than throw the power into the hands of those who he honestly believed, would wreck the realm.

Impatient Tories.

The Opposition, acting under the direction of Peel and Wellington, who now understood and respected each other thoroughly preserved an attitude of forbearance to the Government which was not entirely to the taste of all the

party Lord Wilton having written to complain of Sir ANN 1838  
Robert Peel's lukewarmness, the Duke replied—

" 31st October, 1837.

" I do not like to interfere in the affairs of the House of Commons, first, because I have nothing to say to them, and next because I really do not understand them. Old men ought not to chatter of things that they don't understand any more than *charming women!* . . . I generally find that without much communication of any sort, Sir Robert Peel and I find ourselves pretty nearly on the same ground " \*

During the winter the Tory rank and file grew still more impatient. Many friends, personal and political, beset the Duke with appeals to attack the Government, but he never varied the spirit of his reply.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Redesdale*

" January 28th, 1838

" . . I daresay that I am in the wrong. There is nobody who dislikes, so much as I do, and who knows so little of Party Management. I hate it, because in my opinion it is the cause of all that we are suffering at present. It destroyed the Parliament of 1830. It caused the Reform Bill. It prevented the Alteration of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords in the Year 1832 and the formation of the Parliament in May of that Year. It had nothing to say to the Events of 1834. It destroyed the Parliament formed by those Events. That which I cannot and will not do is to become a Party to any vote which is to involve the Honor of the Country or that of the House of which I am a Member. But I have no objection to others doing what they please. I am afraid that my opinions are very displeasing to many, as well Members of our House as out of doors—I am sorry for it, but if I am to act it must be according to my own opinions." †

\* *Apsley House MSS*

† *Ibid.* The drafts of these and innumerable other letters are usually in the Duke's own handwriting.

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\* *Apsley House MSS*

† *Ibid.* The drafts of these and innumerable other letters are really in the Duke's own handwriting.

ET 68.

*The same to Mr Arbuthnot*

“15th February 1832.

“If I was to decide for myself I should say don't engage in a vote which is to turn out the existing Government. Let us avoid to involve the country in the difficulty of having no Government at all, in order to get out of the difficulty of having a very weak one. To this you answer Let Peel dissolve the Parliament. I doubt the measure having the effect of giving him a majority to enable him to carry on the Government. We can't carry on a Government with a working majority of 30, as the existing Government do. Our people will not attend to support us. All theirs attend to support them in Government and will attend to oppose us in Government. But there is an element in this case which is a novelty since the year 1831—that is the objection to change on the part of the Queen. I dined yesterday at the Palace, and passed there the evening. Lord Melbourne was there. I sat on her right he on her left, at dinner I entertain no doubt that her Majesty is quite satisfied with him. My opinion is that she does nothing without consulting him, even upon the time of quitting the table after dinner and retiring to bed at night. I must say that if the adoption of a course in Parliament which is to break up the existing Government is doubtful, supposing the Queen to be favourable to our views, or at least neutral, the circumstances are still more complicated if we are not only to force ourselves upon the House of Commons and the publick, but likewise upon the Queen herself. I have always been and always shall be in front of the Battle. I cannot hold back. But it is a little too much for Noblemen and Honble Gentlemen to call upon Sir Robert Peel and me to put ourselves at their Head to carry into Execution a course of policy of which we disapprove and see the danger trusting to their support when we have found in this very Session that we can not rely upon their support in any opinion of ours or upon any Measure whatever”

The  
Canadian  
rebellion.

In truth, the Government were experiencing plenty of difficulties within their own camp. The first announcement

*Apology House MSS.*

by Ministers on the meeting of Parliament on 16th January, ANN 1838 1838, had reference to the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, which had been in active rebellion for several months. The Government had determined to suspend the constitution of Lower Canada, and to invest Lord Durham with almost plenary powers to restore the authority of the Crown. The Radicals vehemently opposed this proposal, which was objectionable also from a Conservative point of view, but Peel agreed with Wellington that it would never do to join the Radicals in an attack on the Government. There was perfect harmony between the Opposition leaders of the two Houses on this question, and Lord Stanley entirely concurred with them. Stanley wrote to Peel, exceedingly indignant with Brougham, who, ever since his exclusion from office in 1835, had been a thorn in the flank of the Administration. Brougham had written to Stanley—

“I am in wonderment at the extreme self-denial of your Conservatives. I thought I had opened the door of the closet for them, and put the Government in a fire that would destroy them, when, the Duke steps forward and shuts the door in his own face, and protects them from my battery. I must say he was their only defender, and that he has never helped them since, but a Government has ninety-nine lives if its adversaries help it as soon as it is in peril ”

Far different was Wellington's conception of the duty of a loyal Opposition. Although opposed in party to Lord Melbourne, he appreciated the advantage of having at the head of the Government a statesman who was accustomed to meet all proposals for reform by the chilling inquiry—  
“Why not leave it alone?”

*The Duke of Wellington to Sir Robert Peel*

“London, 22nd February, 1838.

“I concur in opinion with Lord Stanley that you may be forced to a vote upon Sir W. Molesworth's resolution, whatever

Æt 69 — University of Glasgow to allow himself to be nominated as Lord Rector, he reiterated the objections on the score of his want of learning which he had made when the Chancellorship of Oxford University was offered to him, and explained that the circumstances in that case were exceptional.\*

Coronation  
of Queen  
Victoria.

The Queen's Coronation in 1838 brought together a group on which a London crowd gazed with intense interest, and bestowed hearty applause. The representative sent to represent Louis Philippe was the *Maréchal Soult*, Duc de Dalmatie. Some of the chief features in the rejoicings are well described in Lady Salisbury's journal.

22nd June — "The Duke and Soult met in the music room at the Queen's concert for the first time for many years and shook hands. Soult's appearance is different from what I expected he is a gentleman-like old man with rather a benevolent cast of countenance, such as I should have expected in William Penn or Washington tall, and rather stooping the top of his head bald.

The Duke, though the lines on his face are deeper has a fresher colour and a brighter eye. The Duke is extremely annoyed at Croker having brought out that article in the *Quarterly* on the battle of Toulouse just at this moment. He had written twice to endeavour to prevent him doing so. †

On the evening of the Coronation Day the Duke gave a ball at Apsley House which was attended by Soult and the other distinguished foreigners.

"I was amused," wrote Lady Salisbury, 'to hear the Duc d'Orléans complimenting the Duke upon the applause he had met with in the Abbey

' *Vous avez eu un succès très flatteur monseigneur ce matin.*'

' *Oui, replied the Duke, with the utmost indifference, 'on me reçoit toujours très bien dans ce pays-ci.'*

*Apsley House MSS.*

† The publication of the eleventh (Toulouse) volume of Garwood's edition of the Wellington Despatches had been purposely postponed by the Duke's instructions to avoid giving offence to Soult.



LE MARÉCHAL SOULT, DUC DE DALMATIE

[Vol II p 320]





"I think, however, though he always despises *mob* popularity, ANN 1838. that he was gratified with the applause which came from the most respectable people—judges and privy councillors included—which attended his leaving the Abbey. But a feeling—real and sincere, though almost a romantic one—that the chief attention and homage is on all occasions due to the Sovereign when present (the effect of that extraordinary devotion to the Crown which I never saw approached in any other person) diminished his gratification and even gave him a degree of annoyance. He looked back to see if the Queen was coming with an air of vexation, as if to say, 'This is too much—this belongs of right to her' . . .

*2nd July*—"Dined at Lord Londonderry's the Austrian, Russian, Prussian, and Swedish Ministers, the Duke, Peel, Lyndhursts, etc, in all eight and forty . . . The first time the Duke has been asked to dine there these three years, but I suppose they have at last seen the folly of their conduct, and *he* is always ready to be reconciled.

*3rd July*—"A ball at home. . . . I saw the Duke present Hardinge to Soult—"J'ai l'honneur de vous présenter le chevalier Hardinge qui était avec l'armée quand——"

"'Tout ce qui me vient de votre main,' replied Soult, 'm'est toujours agréable' (to which Lady Salisbury added a malicious note of interrogation)

"The Duke is disinclined to give the foreigners a dinner because Soult must necessarily be among them, and he does not like to ask him to a table covered with trophies won against the French

*6th July*.—"Soult's ball, another great mob. he asked everybody who had left their names with him

*10th July*—" . . . Went to the House of Lords. . . . Brougham opened the debate (on the orders given to attack Sardinian vessels conveying arms to Don Carlos) with a capital speech. Lord Melbourne's reply weak, or rather no reply at all, Lord Ripon good, Lord Minto a wretched speech, in which he laid down the doctrine that such orders would be justified by the Quadruple Treaty. This induced the Duke to abandon his first intention of not supporting Brougham's motion, and to resolve

Mr 60. upon dividing—very few of our Peers in the House—<sup>Lord Salisbury</sup> sent off in all directions to collect them—Lord Redesdale\* running to and fro—when up gets Lord Melbourne and throws over Lord Minto and his doctrine entirely. This induces the Duke, who forgets that he is not at the head of troops who can wheel about and retire, to rise again and recommend their Lordships not to divide, after delivering which word of command he retired, followed by Lord Aberdeen, to dine with Soult. The Peers on our side were furious, and though some abstained from voting, a great number, among whom I regret to say was Lord Salisbury, divided in support of Brougham's motion, which was lost by the numbers being even. There is no doubt the Duke was right in the principle of policy, but in a party view nothing could be more fatal than such a change after the Lords had been summoned from all parts for a division.

18th July — ' Lord Salisbury went with the Duke to the City dinner—that City dinner which I have been moving heaven and earth to get the Duke to go to, by having the Berensford dinner put off. And a pretty result it has had! After a long delay in giving the Duke's health, the Lord Mayor at last gave his and Soult's united!! His Grace the Duke of Dalmeida and his Grace the Duke of Wellington!!! Lord Londonderry instantly got up and left the room, observing to those about him that he would not stay to be insulted. Lord Salisbury would have followed him, but that he depended on the Duke, who got up and made an excellent reply in very good *faute*. But he could not do otherwise than feel the insult, and expressed it to Lord Salisbury on the way home. It was proposed to the Duke to give the French army 'D—n em! he said. 'I'll have nothing to do with em but beat 'em.'

Monday 16th July — "Went early to see the Duke. He is going to have the foreigners to dinner on the 28th, and showed me some vases he intended as ornaments on the table they are presents from Louis XVIII., and therefore trophies, but they have no inscriptions or representations to betray their origin.

28th July — "The Duke's great dinner to the foreigners. We dined in the gallery altogether about 48 Prince George

of Cambridge sat next me and a delightful neighbour he was. . . ANN 1839  
Curiously enough, when Soult entered the house, the band  
played *Vive Henri Quatre!* . . . Soult went away rather early.  
There was no taking leave between the Duke and him." \*

During this summer a reconciliation, or rather a renewal of Reconciliation  
intercourse, took place between the Duke and Lord Wellesley of Wellington and Wellesley  
It is melancholy to reflect on the degree in which these  
brothers, once so affectionate and relying so much on each  
other, had become estranged, especially when it is remembered  
how helpful the elder had been to the younger in his early  
days. It is not easy to discern the exact causes of the  
coldness; perhaps it arose as much as anything out of the  
appointment of Lord Anglesey as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland  
in 1828. At all events, on 16th May, having received a  
message from Lord Wellesley through Lady Wellesley, the  
Duke rode down to see him at Fulham "There was no  
*explanation*, but the brothers met most cordially," † the first  
time for several years

The Government had weathered the rough weather from  
the Canadian quarter, it was a far less threatening disturbance  
which caused them to founder in the spring of 1839. The  
Ministry was strong in the favour of the Queen; no young  
monarch could have been more fortunate in the character of  
the chief adviser of the Crown, and her Majesty repaid Lord  
Melbourne's services with her affection and confidence. But  
out-of-doors the Government were losing such remnant of  
esteem which they had preserved hitherto, and their growing  
unpopularity soon found reflection in the action of their  
supporters in the House of Commons. The bill for the  
suspension of the constitution of Jamaica, where the House  
of Assembly had declared against Imperial control or inter-  
ference, was carried on 6th May by a majority of only five  
votes. The Ministry resigned, and the Queen at once sent  
for the Duke of Wellington, who begged to be excused from

\* Salisbury MSS, 1838

† *Ibid*

Æt 70 forming a Cabinet on account of his 'advanced age, and recommended her Majesty to send for Sir Robert Peel. The Duke's apprehensions about the difficulty of becoming a Queen's Minister were amusing "Peel has no manners and I have no small talk." He wished to be in the Cabinet without office, but Peel did not approve of this.

*Mr Arbuthnot to Sir Robert Peel.*

"Apsley House, 8th May 1839

' Fortunately I caught the Duke ready dressed and sitting in his room. I repeated to him what you said against his being in the Cabinet only as a Privy Councillor. He said— Very well, I am quite ready to have the Foreign Office'—which I had named to him in the way that you wished I should—and added, 'that he had promised the Queen to serve her in any way that would be thought most advisable, and that he would keep his promise. \*

The formation of the Cabinet was not difficult, but it is well known how Peel had to resign his commission when it became a question of filling certain offices which he did not even know existed. He made out a list by the aid of a Red Book of new appointments to all the Household offices, except those below the rank of Lady of the Bedchamber. On this list being submitted to the Queen, she declined to hear of the removal of any of her ladies. Peel, "unable to recognise any distinction in respect to public appointments provided for by Act of Parliament and instituted for purposes of State, on account of the sex of the parties holding them," † could not yield the point, and, on this curiously trivial difference, the formation of a Ministry broke down, and Lord Melbourne with his colleagues was recalled.

The Duke had completed the allotted tale of threescore

\* *Peel Letters*, II. 291.

† *Ibid.*, 405.

The Bed  
chamber  
difficulty

Lord  
Melbourne  
resumes.

and ten years. Except his deafness,\* which was a severe ANN 1839  
 trial to him, and a rheumatic affection of the muscles of the  
 neck, which was the cause of the stooping head which marred  
 his military carriage, he had enjoyed a singular immunity  
 from ailments of all kinds. But he had touched the milestone  
 which is associated with so many partings, he stood at the  
 point whence the earthly landscape seems empty and drear;  
 and now the circle of his intimate friends was about to be  
 lessened by the loss of one of the most cherished. A few  
 days after the entry last quoted, Lady Salisbury's journal stops  
 abruptly. She fell into ill health, which, continuing all winter,  
 was the occasion of her going to Broadstairs for sea air in the Lady  
Salisbury's  
illness.  
 spring of 1839. On her way thither she stayed some weeks  
 at Apsley House, and it is touching to note the sedulous care  
 bestowed by the Duke on arrangements for her comfort. In  
 July Lady Salisbury was recommended to go to Carlsbad,  
 the Duke, as Master of the Elder Brethren, placing at  
 her disposal the Trinity House steam yacht. His anxiety  
 about the invalid is manifested by frequent letters both to  
 her and Lord Salisbury, and at the same time he provided  
 for her amusement a commentary on all the current gossip of  
 the day. The Duke was still apprehensive about the Queen's  
 tendency to Whiggism, which he was afraid was being  
 strengthened by the combined influence of her mother, Lord  
 Melbourne, and King Leopold of Belgium; although the  
 Whigs suspected her Majesty of being a Tory at heart.

June 29 — "I took my daughter-in-law (Lady Douro) to Court  
 yesterday. She was much admired by everybody, especially by  
 the Queen, who was very gracious to me there, as well as at Lady  
 Westminster's at night

September 19 — "On the day that I arrived at Windsor Castle,  
 the Queen desired me to ride with her . . . I rode with her,

\* On 14th May, 1838, Lord Melbourne postponed the second reading of  
 the Post Law Bill which was down for that day at the Duke's request, because  
 he was suffering from an access of deafness (*Apsley House MSS*)

Æt 70 was out two or three hours, was wet to the skin—as wet as if I had been drawn through the river Thames, experienced no inconvenience therefrom, was at a ball at night, and travelled here (Walmer) from Windsor in a day, as well as I ever was. God bless you! Believe me, ever yours most Affectionately,

“W”

As the autumn went on the news of Lady Salisbury's health became less favourable, she could write no more, and letters passed only between the two men.

October 3rd.—“The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, with twenty followers and servants, are coming here (Walmer) this day. I am never very partial to the part of Boniface! I am less equal to the performance of it this day than I have ever been.”†

Death of  
Lady  
Salisbury

Early in October the Salisburys returned to England, and Wellington's letters to his lordship were daily, then they ceased suddenly on 15th October till, on the 28th, he writes—

“I have not written to you since the fatal Tuesday. I was aware how little of consolation anything I could write could be to you: that you must have been sensible that there was no individual in existence who could have known (as well as myself) the extent of the loss which you and yours have sustained, and that I sincerely felt for you. It would have been impertinent to write on such topics at such a moment. I write to you, however, in order to continue our old habits, which is the course which I feel convinced the Departed would have wished that we should follow. I entreat you to reflect that you are of an age and in a station which render it necessary that you should exert yourself, that your family require much attention and much exertion from you, that there are important public questions to which you must attend, and that you cannot give way to the affliction which you so naturally feel.”†

The Duke felt the shock very severely, although he does not seem to have confided his grief to anybody. A few weeks later, on 19th November, he had an alarming seizure at Walmer. On returning from a ride, he sat down to write some letters, and, feeling unwell, caused Dr. M'Arthur to be sent for. Before the doctor could arrive, the Duke's bell rang again; his valet, Kendall, found him speechless, with his jaw dropped, but the Duke signed to him to leave the room. He did so, but, remaining behind the door, heard a heavy fall, and, on entering again, saw his master on the floor. On coming to himself the Duke was both blind and speechless, but he gradually recovered all his faculties, and Lord Mahon, who was the first friend to arrive at his bedside, had the satisfaction of remaining to watch his steady restoration to health. The doctors attributed the attack to the Duke's habits of extreme abstemiousness. On the day of his seizure he had eaten nothing but a morsel of dry bread at breakfast, and a piece of Abernethy biscuit on coming in from his ride, and for some months he had left off wine altogether. On the 22nd he had recovered so as to be able to go to London and attend the Privy Council to which the Queen announced her intended marriage.\*

ANN 1839  
Sudden  
illness of  
the Duke.

\* Stanhope, 196-214.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CORN LAWS.

1840-1846

Jan. 16	1840	The Queen's betrothal. Renewed coldness between Wellington and Peel.	December 6	Lord John Russell sent for. Peel resumes.
May 27	1841.	Defeat of the Government.	Jan. 4	1842. The Duke's letter to Lord Salisbury.
June 23		Dissolution of Parliament. Peel's second Administration. The Corn Duties. General relaxation of tariffs. The Duke's intercourse with early associates.	" 22	Peel proposes to repeal the Corn Laws.
August	1845.	The potato disease appears.	February 17	The Duke considers his position, and explains it to Lord Stanley.
November		Lord John Russell's manifesto.	June 25	The Corn Bill passes the Lords. Defeat of Ministers on the Irish Coercion Bill.*
December 2		Difference in the Cabinet.		They resign, and Lord John Russell takes office.
" 5		Sir R. Peel resigns.	Appendix G	* The Duke's principles in Opposition.
			Appendix H	" National Defence."

The Queen's betrothal.

WHEN the Queen opened Parliament in person on 16th January 1840 her speech contained the official announcement of her betrothal to Prince Albert. In the House of Lords it fell to the lot of the Duke of Wellington to take exception to the omission of the word 'Protestant' in reference to the Prince. It was inserted upon the Duke's amendment, although Lord Melbourne expressed the opinion that it was superfluous. In the House of Commons there

serious difference arose over the Ministerial proposals for the marriage. On Lord John Russell moving that £50,000 a year should be provided out of the Consolidated Fund for the Queen's Consort, an amendment reducing the allowance to £30,000 was moved by Colonel Sibthorpe, supported by Peel, the Tory Opposition, and the Radicals, and carried against the Government by a majority of 104. Lord Melbourne pocketed the affront, but the fate of his Ministry was not long deferred.

The Duke showed manifest traces of his severe illness. "He looked better than I expected," noted Greville, "very thin, and his clothes hanging about him, but strong on his legs and his head erect. The great alteration I remarked was in his voice, which was hollow, though not loud, and his utterance, though not indistinct, was very slow. He is certainly now only a ruin."

The Irish Municipal Corporation Bill and the Bill for uniting the two Canadas proved the occasion of fresh difference between the Duke and Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert felt that the honour of the party was involved in adhering to that engagement,<sup>†</sup> but the Duke did not share his view of the obligation, and announced his intention of destroying the measure in the House of Lords.

In regard to the Union of the two Canadas, Peel had expressed himself strongly in favour of that policy, and he adhered to his opinion. "I cannot expect others, who take a different view of this question, to adopt my opinions, but I adhere to my own, and I cannot undertake any responsibility should views adverse to mine be taken, and prevail."<sup>‡</sup> The Duke as strongly held the view that the union of the two provinces would lead to the separation of Canada from the mother-country, and he determined to use his power with the Lords to prevent it. All intercourse ceased between him and Sir Robert, their friends, especially Sir James Graham,

Renewed coldness between Wellington and Peel.

\* Greville, 2nd series, i 103

† Peel Letters, ii 434

‡ Ibid, 438

Æt 72. were apprehensive of a split in the party, Lady Salisbury was no longer on the scene to bring about reconciliation recourse was had to the patient influence of Arbuthnot.

"It is impossible," wrote Graham to Peel on 9th June, "not to make great allowances for the age and infirmities of the Duke. He probably is aware that life with him is drawing to a close and is honestly and naturally afraid lest concessions made by him against his judgment should lead to fatal results, which, in the opinion of posterity, might cast a shade over the lustre of his fame." "

Herein Graham misjudged the Duke's motives, though he was right about the infirmities. There never was an actor on the great stage so indifferent about the judgment alike of the contemporary public and of posterity. It is true that he was always at great pains to explain his motives to his colleagues but for the rest he cared nothing. In this he was a striking contrast to Peel, who desired, and wisely desired, to carry public opinion with him, and was sedulous to leave an elaborate *apologia* in his autobiography. Can anybody imagine Wellington sitting down to write his own memoirs?

*Mr Arbuthnot to Sir James Graham.*

"Apsley House, 12th June 1810.

"I hope you will not now suppose that I say it from vanity but in truth I believe that my presence here has been useful. It has been of use to let the Duke know what the leaders thought and wished, and this I have done in our several conversations. He has never actually said that he should take the course which was expected of him, but I have seen his mind turning by degrees to that course, and of this I was so convinced yesterday morning that I wrote to Lord Aberdeen that, in my opinion, he had better not talk to the Duke, as he had said to me that he would, but leave it all now to the workings of his own mind.

. . . Rely upon it that the party will not break up. . . . What ANN 1841  
 I have most lamented was that I could not get Peel to call on  
 the Duke. I could not presume to press it, but I told him that  
 in my opinion it would have the best effect."\*

History, when written, seems to be composed of the acts of a few public men, upon whom the influence of unobtrusive individuals is scarcely observed, yet this is often of lasting effect. Arbuthnot's quiet and discreet pressure gradually led the Duke away from a course of action whence no amount of argument or invective could have deterred him. When the Canada Bill came before the Lords for second reading on 30th June, Wellington declined to vote for it as "a measure entirely dangerous to the stability of the Colonial Government," yet he advised the House to allow it to go into Committee. With even greater inconsistency, which it is impossible to palliate or explain away, he adduced twenty-seven reasons against the measure on its third reading on 27th July, but recommended his party to remit it to the House of Commons for further consideration. The fact is, that this was one of the occasions on which the Duke sank his private judgment rather than bring about a rupture in the Conservative party, in the early return to power of which he believed the security of the monarchy and the welfare of the country to be involved. Lord Aberdeen told Greville that he considered that the Duke had never rendered greater service in his whole life to the public good than he did this session, by moderating the violence of his own party and keeping them together. They chafed at the restraint; they vowed the Duke was in his dotage, but they could not refuse obedience †

"I cannot contemplate," wrote Sir James Graham to Arbuthnot on 27th July, "a Conservative Government without the active aid and co-operation of the Duke of Wellington, and though he may be dissatisfied with Peel's recent conduct, yet

\* *Peel Letters*, ii 443

† *Greville*, 2nd series, i 296

Æt. 72.

approving his general principles, and acknowledging his integrity and general worth, he will not, if the necessity should occur, refuse to act with a body of gentlemen entitled to his confidence and support in a great crisis of public affairs, on account of a passing difference, the causes of which are practically at an end." \*

Greville speaks much at this time of the failure of the Duke's powers. "He is a ruin," says he, yet was the old spirit still strong within him. A Continental war seemed imminent in 1840, the King of Prussia commissioned Lord William Bentinck to ascertain if the Duke would consent to take command of the German Confederate armies, he replied that he was as able as ever and as willing!

Arbuthnot's good offices.

Arbuthnot the indefatigable succeeded during the autumn in finally restoring that cordial intercourse between Wellington and Peel which moderate Conservatives regarded as indispensable to their continuance as a party. Much of the misunderstanding had been caused by the Duke's increasing deafness, of this Arbuthnot succeeded in convincing both him and Peel, so that on 13th November one finds the Duke once more writing in the old strain of intimacy to his colleague about his sailor son William Peel †

Encourage him by all means to write down his observations of the operations of which he is the witness, of in which he is an actor, and above all to revise them after writing them, and correct any error into which he may have fallen, leaving on the face of the paper the error and its correction. This habit will accustom him to an accurate observation and report of facts which are most important, destined as he most likely is to direct and carry on great operations." ‡

Thus when, in the summer of 1841 repeated defeats of the Government betokened an approaching crisis not a cloud

\* *Peel Letters* II. 415.

† Afterwards Captain Sir William Peel, K.O.B., who commanded the 1st Brigade in the Crimea.

‡ *Peel Letters*, II. 452.

remained between the Opposition leaders in the two Houses ANN 1811  
of Parliament.

"The truth is," wrote the Duke to Sir Robert, "that all I desire is to be as useful as possible to the Queen's service—to do anything, to go anywhere, and hold any office, or no office as may be thought most desirable or expedient for the Queen's service by you . . . I don't desire even to have a voice in deciding upon it." \*

Peel moved a vote of no confidence in the Government on 27th May, it was carried by a majority of a single vote, and on 23rd June Parliament was dissolved. The fortune of the polls favoured the Opposition the Conservatives who went to the country in a minority of thirty, were returned in a majority of seventy-six. It would have been greater but for the imminence of disruption in the Scottish Church, and the refusal of Wellington and Peel to pledge themselves to support the Duke of Argyll's bill dealing with ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland, but it was sufficient, and Peel had no difficulty in forming a Cabinet of fourteen ministers. Wellington entered it without holding a department, and the character of the Administration was marked by Sir James Graham taking the seals of the Home Office and Lord Stanley those of the Colonial Office. The Old Tory party drew consolation from the inclusion of the Duke of Buckingham, although Lord Londonderry's indignation at being left out in the cold and sent as ambassador to Vienna was bitter and freely expressed † "The Duke," wrote Arbuthnot to Sir Robert Peel, "said at Vienna Metternich would know Lord Londonderry well, and prevent him from doing mischief, and that for his part he would rather have him in the House of Lords without any office, and prepared to do his worst, than see him at the Board of Ordnance, but that you must dispose of him as you thought best" ‡

Defeat of  
Ministers  
and  
General  
Election

Peel's  
second  
Adminis-  
tration

In the disposal of offices outside the Cabinet, Peel duly

\* *Peel Letters*, II. 461

† *Ibid*, 484

‡ *Ibid*, 483

Mr Gladstone joins the Ministry  
 At 72 recognised the ability and energy of one, at least, of the most promising of the younger Conservatives, William Ewart Gladstone, who was appointed Vice President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, with the rank of Privy Councillor. His services were soon in request in a matter with which his capacity was peculiarly well fitted to deal. The Conservatives had succeeded to an embarrassing heritage in the accumulated deficits of the five years of Queen Victoria's reign. The deficit for 1841-2 had been £2 334 000 that estimated for 1842-3 was £2 470 000, but before bringing in his budget, Peel dealt with the Corn Law. Under the law of 1828 when wheat was quoted at 59s. or 60s. a quarter a duty of 27s. was exacted on foreign corn, which fell as the price rose until, at the quotation of 73s. a quarter foreign corn was only taxed at 1s. Peel proposed a 20s. duty upon corn when quoted at 50s. to 51s., to be reduced till the 73s. limit was touched, when the duty was 1s. as before. The Corn Law League scouted this measure as an insignificant relief, and Peel was burnt in effigy as an oppressor of the people. The country Tories denounced it as not giving enough security to profitable agriculture, the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Hardwicke resigned office. Lord John Russell moved the rejection of the Bill in favour of a fixed as against a fluctuating duty. Mr Gladstone led the resistance to Russell's amendment, and after the rejection of Mr Villiers's proposal to repeal the Corn Laws altogether Peel's sliding scale was adopted by the House of Commons, but it did not help him in dealing with the prospective deficiency. He felt himself at the parting of ways, and he proved not unequal to the momentous decision to be made. He produced the most sensational budget of the century. He had the courage to impose a 7d. Income Tax which, accustomed as the present generation has become to the weight of the burden, was at that time an unprecedented manner of raising revenue in time of peace. Ireland was exempted from the tax except her absentee landlords but was called on to pay an additional 1)

a gallon on spirits, bringing her on an equality in this respect ANN 1841.  
 with Scotland. By these and other subsidiary means he turned his deficit of £2,470,000 into a surplus of £1,900,000. So far, though there was much ground for grumbling, there was none for alarm on the part of the high Tories. But when he went on to explain the proposed application of his surplus to lowering of duties on seven hundred and fifty out of twelve hundred articles taxed on import, then the Protectionists indeed beheld Pelion upon Ossa piled against them—the lowered tariff on imported goods as well as the modified tax on foreign corn. Would the Duke, once their pride and fearless champion, stand this? nay—would he actually have a hand in it? The Duke was to stand this and a great deal more, as time was to prove; but there was one part of the financial scheme which pleased him little, namely, the continued reductions in the military and naval establishments for purposes of economy.\*

Relaxation  
of tariffs.

Many lifelike descriptions have been made by eye-witnesses of the Duke's appearance and habits in Parliament during the last ten years of his life. The invariable blue frock-coat was relieved by a white neckcloth fastened behind by a large silver or steel buckle. White trousers for summer wear gave place to dark cloth in winter; the waistcoat was white in summer, and buff or some brighter hue in winter. During the last session of his life, 1851-2, his chest and shoulders were protected by a short cape of white fur, singularly unlike ordinary masculine attire, but harmonising admirably with the Duke's clear complexion and white hair. He generally rode to and from the House,† but sometimes drove in a four-wheeled chaise designed by himself. In those days, it was still the privilege of peers to vote by proxy, and of such proxies as many as sixty were sometimes entrusted to the

The Duke's  
appear-  
ance in  
Parlia-  
ment

\* See Appendix H, p. 356

† "The neat, white-haired old gentleman, whom we have all seen rolling upon his horse in the Park and Pall Mall—a wonder to all bystanders that he did not topple over" (*Punch*, vol ix 1845)



Æt 72. Duke's disposal, rendering him, had he chosen to be less scrupulous in using his power against the Government of the day a truly formidable personage in opposition.

The Duke's attention to the business before the House was unflagging. He listened, in spite of his disabling deafness, to every speech from beginning to end, seldom leaving the House before it adjourned. His style in speaking was vehement, but the reverse of fluent, and, like many imperfect orators he used exaggerated phrases to impress his opinions upon his hearers. His speeches abound in repetitions and contradictions singularly at variance with the lucidity of at least his military despatches. Sir Walter Scott described his method in debate as "slicing the argument into two or three parts and helping himself to the best." "He usually sits," wrote a contributor to *Fraser's Magazine*, "in a state of abstraction, his arms folded, his head sunk on his breast, his legs stretched out he seems to be asleep. But, in a very few moments he shows that he has not been an inattentive observer of the debate. He suddenly starts up, advances (sometimes with faltering steps) to the table, and, without preface or preliminary statement, dashes at once into the real question in dispute." In the Cabinet, Charles Greville who as Clerk to the Privy Council had good opportunities of observation, notes in 1844 the extraordinary deference paid to the Duke by all his colleagues. Each Minister went to sit next to him before speaking, so that the Duke might hear him, but he adds that the old gentleman was very irritable and never would alter anything he had written.

Most of the Duke's biographers, even his most ardent panegyrists have reproached him with indifference towards or forgetfulness of his old comrades of campaign, but to do so reveals a want of insight into the exigencies of political life. Had the Duke been merely one of those who

The Duke  
and his  
early asso-  
ciates.

"Lean'd on the walls and bask'd before the sun,  
Chiefs who no more in bloody fights engage  
But wise through time and narrative with age  
In summer days like gramboppers rejoice"—

had he, at the close of one career, assumed his well-earned ANN 1811 leisure instead of entering upon another, not less arduous than the first—then, indeed, he might have been blamed if he did not constantly and by preference seek the society of those officers who had enabled him to achieve such greatness. It can scarcely be doubted that, left to make his own choice, he would have indulged his inclination for repose; his letters abound in proof that, in accepting civil office, he was acting solely under a cogent sense of duty. It shows remarkable unfamiliarity with the calls upon one in the higher spheres of political life, to suppose that a statesman has the disposal of his own time or the choice of his own associates.

When Mr W. H. Smith, having been First Lord of the Admiralty in the last Disraeli Administration, was offered the Chairmanship of the London and North-Western Railway in 1881, he asked the advice of his chief. Lord Beaconsfield replied, "Politics is a jealous mistress," and dissuaded Smith from accepting the desirable post. However open his lordship's syntax may be to criticism, none who have experience of the exactions of political life can question the truth of his sentiment. Every hour in every day must be lived, in office hours and while Parliament sits the man is a slave; the day's work over, multitudes of social obligations—literally obligations—sadly interfere equally with the cultivation of private friendship and the ordinary courtesies of acquaintanceship. No man ever threw himself more unreservedly into the discharge of duty than did the Duke, he carried into civil life that concentration of energy on the matter in hand which had given him ascendancy in military operations. "Exclusiveness of purpose," said Napoleon, "is the secret of great success and of great operations," it was that exclusiveness—that concentration—which made Wellington seem a hard man, and drew upon him the unfavourable comments of Greville upon his inattention and want of affection to his mother and elder brother. There is nothing so chilling to friendship—nothing which friends and relatives resent so much—as

Æt 78. preoccupation, yet preoccupation—the withdrawal of attention from those not engaged in a common pursuit—is inseparable from great performance. Larpet noticed this in Wellington during the Peninsular war. Writing from the Pyrenees on 9th August, 1813 he said—

"You ask me if Lord Wellington has recollected — with regard. He seems to have had a great opinion of him, but scarcely has ever mentioned him to me. In truth, I think Lord Wellington has an active, busy mind, always looking to the future, and is so used to lose a useful man that, as soon as gone, he seldom thinks more of him. He would be always, I have no doubt, ready to serve any one who had been about him who was gone, or the friend of a deceased friend, but he seems not to think much about you when once out of the way. He has too much of everything and everybody always in his way to think much of the absent." "

It must ever be so in accordance with the limitations of human nature. When the head is incessantly occupied, the emotions of the heart cannot find expression, and although this does not imply that the heart is cold or hard, it was inevitable that men who had been closely associated with Wellington previous to 1815 should find their intercourse with him interrupted, and access to him straitened, after he set his hand to work in which they had no share. Not unnaturally some of his old friends felt sore and complained of the Duke's heartlessness. Frequent reference occurs in the Duke's correspondence to the constant drafts on what might have been when his party was in opposition, his leisure. Thus in 1834 when Colonel Gurwood was editing the despatches, and the Duke found it difficult to revise the proofs with punctuality—

"The truth is that there is no impediment to any serious occupation like a house full of company, particularly when part of"

Larpet, H. 42.

the company is a member or members of the Royal family. To ANN 1845  
 some men, more time than twenty-four hours are necessary in a  
 day, others are under the necessity of what is called *killing time*.  
 But when they require that the first should assist them with  
 their company, the mischief that is done to everything like a  
 serious occupation is immense." \*

When Parliament was prorogued on 9th August, 1845, the Peel's  
 Peel Administration seemed to be floating on summer waters Adminis-  
 tration.  
 No boding clouds betokened the storm that was brewing, the  
 prosperity of the country was advancing; the revenue, if not  
 progressing with the leaps and bounds by which its movement  
 was described in later years, was each year in excess of the  
 expenditure: the evil days of deficit had been thrown behind  
 Some discontent, indeed, there was in the ministerialist ranks,  
 Mr. Gladstone had seceded from the Government on account  
 of their Maynooth College policy, and Protectionist *frondeurs*  
 muttered their displeasure at the growing inclination of  
 the Prime Minister to Free Trade Sometimes the mutter-  
 ing assumed the volume of an angry roar, as when Lord  
 Essex, speaking at St Albans, denounced the Anti-Corn Law  
 League as "the most cunning, unscrupulous, knavish, pestilent  
 body of men that ever plagued this or any other country"  
 "Every act we have done," Peel had said on Mr Villiers's  
 motion for the repeal of the Corn Law, "has been an act  
 tending to establish the gradual abatement of purely pro-  
 tective duties." But the movement in Peel's own opinions  
 had been so gradual and unobtrusive, it had found reflection  
 in the minds of so many other public and business men, that  
 no visible schism could be traced in the Conservative phalanx  
 Not the less surely did a fissure exist, and a convulsion was  
 at hand which was to convert it suddenly into a chasm.

At the very moment when legislators were going off with The  
 light hearts to their holiday retreats, news came that a dise:  
 mysterious disease had affected the potato crop in the Isle of

Æt 76. Wight. Soon after it was found to be prevalent throughout the southern English counties as well as in France and the Low Countries. Now potatoes had come to be to the *Irish* countryman what wheat was to the Englishman—far more than oatmeal was to the Scotsman. The destruction of the crop in England might mean ruin to a few hundreds of farmers in Ireland it would bring millions to the brink of starvation. Before the Cabinet met on the last day of October the disease was rampant in Ireland. Ministers had to grapple with a dilemma caused by the destruction of one-third of the whole crop in that country and the prospective disappearance of the rest. Peel advised his colleagues that Parliament should be summoned before Christmas and called on them to decide between the "determined maintenance, modification and suspension of the Corn Laws." He recommended the last, as following the precedent of 1826 but he was too honest to disguise his doubts amounting practically to conviction, that, once suspended, it would never be in the power of any Ministry to revive them. Only three of his colleagues Aberdeen, Graham and Sidney Herbert agreed with their chief. The Duke of Wellington was opposed to the policy of opening the ports to corn but declared his intention of not deserting his chief, if he considered the repeal of the Act necessary for his (Peel's) position in Parliament and in the public view.

Lord John  
Russell's  
manifesto.

The discussions in the Cabinet continued throughout November the crisis was rendered more acute by a manifesto addressed by Lord John Russell hitherto a stout defender of the Corn Laws, to his constituents in the City of London, announcing his conversion to the policy of abolishing the fixed duty on corn, and calling on them to put an end to a "system which had proved to be the blight of commerce and the bane of agriculture." Public interest excited by this adoption on the part of the leader of the opposition of the whole programme of the Anti Corn Law League, was intensified when the Prime Minister had done so also.

In reply to Peel's Cabinet memorandum circulated on ANN 1845 26th November, the Duke wrote—

"My only object in public life is to support Sir Robert Peel's administration of the Government for the Queen. A good government for the country is more important than Corn Laws or any other consideration, and as long as Sir Robert Peel possesses the confidence of the Queen and of the public, and he has strength to perform his duties, his administration of the Government must be supported."

At first Peel believed that Wellington's example would carry the Cabinet, but on 2nd December, when he laid before his colleagues the outlines of his proposals, whereby the Corn Duty was to be reduced annually so as to disappear finally in eight years, Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch announced their intention of resigning rather than have any hand in such a measure. Two days later, the *Times* announced that Parliament would meet early in January, and that the Government would introduce a measure modifying the Corn Laws, with a view to their repeal. The *Times* was wrong. Sir Robert Peel, his Cabinet maimed, by the retirement of two Ministers and, as to the rest, deeply divided in opinion, had made up his mind to resign, which he did on the following day, 5th December. On the 6th the Queen sent for Lord John Russell, and the *Times*, on realising its blunder, cast all the blame of the crisis on the obstinacy of the Duke of Wellington! Russell had to reckon with a Conservative Parliament, in which the majority might be expected to be hostile to free trade in corn, but that difficulty was resolved by Peel, who assured the Queen that he intended to support such measures as might be "in general conformity with those which he had advised as a Minister." The Duke, as leader of the Opposition in the Lords, might be reckoned upon to take the same course; nevertheless Russell advised the Queen to lay her commands first on those Ministers who had seceded

from Peel. This her Majesty did, but Stanley and Buteleuch declined the attempt, Russell resumed his task, and encountered this difficulty in his own party, that, whereas Palmerston would not accept any post except the Foreign Office, Grey would not consent to enter a Cabinet in which that department was entrusted to one in whom he had so little confidence. While these negotiations were in progress, the Queen wrote to the Duke on 12th December expressing her strong desire, whatever might be the outcome of the crisis, "to see the Duke of Wellington remain at the head of the Army. The Queen appeals to the Duke's so often proved loyalty and attachment to her person, in asking him to give her this assurance." In reply the Duke begged the Queen not to press him to retain the command of the army unless with the entire approval of her responsible advisers.

Peel  
resigns his  
office.

As matters turned out, the difficulty solved itself. Russell having finally abandoned his endeavour to form a Cabinet, the Queen once more sent for Peel and desired him to withdraw his resignation. He did so at once, and returning to London, summoned his colleagues to meet him at half past nine in the evening announced to them his intention of proceeding with such measures in Parliament as he believed to be necessary for the public safety and left the issue in their hands. What followed is succinctly described in his letter to the Queen.

"There was a dead silence, at length interrupted by Lord Stanley's declaring that he must persevere in resigning that he thought the Corn Law ought to have been adhered to, and might have been maintained. The Duke of Wellington said he thought the Corn Law was a subordinate consideration. He was delighted when he received Sir Robert Peel's letter that day announcing that his mind was made up to place his services at your Majesty's disposal. The Duke of Buccleuch behaved admirably—was much agitated thought new circumstances had arisen—was not then decide on resigning. All the other members of the

Government cordially approved of Sir Robert Peel's determination not to abandon your Majesty's service." \* ANN 1846

The Duke of Buccleuch ultimately withdrew his resignation, and the vacancy caused by Lord Stanley resigning the Colonial Office was filled by the admission of Mr. Gladstone

The Duke of Wellington was actuated throughout this critical time by the single consideration of the best means of carrying on the Queen's Government, but it was not to be expected that he should not have to defend himself against vehement, and even violent, reproaches from members of his own party.

*J. W. Croker to the Duke of Wellington.*

"West Moulsey, 4th January, 1846

"I firmly believe that the only trust of the country is in your Grace's consistency and firmness, and I confess I cannot see what right Sir R. Peel can have to drag your Grace through the mire of his own changes of opinion. He may say, with truth and candour, that *his* opinions are changed, but can your Grace say so? . . . Why prefer *his* character and consistency to *your own*? You marked your dissent to Free Trade quite as strongly as he marked *his* assent. Why are you, and the rest, to forfeit all your pledges in order to help him to keep his *last*? I intreat, I implore your Grace to reconsider your position as to stirring *one inch* in a course, the end and object of which is avowed and visible to every eye. I was in hopes that your authority might have stopped the movement, if you too join it, even, as I have said, for one inch, all is lost. . . . Your Grace, if you have read so far with patience, may perhaps say that, if you retire from the Cabinet (not from the Horse Guards), the Government will be broken up, as others must go with you. I hope so—that is the natural and straightforward result—but then you ask, where is a Government to be found? I reply—*Let Peel answer that*. Let him make a Government of those who agree with him in opinion, and *not* of those who *don't*" †

\* *Peel Letters*, iii 284

† *Croker*, iii 50



Æt 76. The public have long been in possession of the Duke's reply to this appeal\* in which occurs the remarkable sentence—"I am the retained servant of the Sovereign of this empire. Nobody can entertain a doubt of this truth, as applied to my professional character. I have invariably up to the latest moment acted accordingly." But the Duke had to endure remonstrance from persons whose opinions he respected more highly than Crokers.

\* Stratfieldsaye 4th January 1844.

"MY DEAR LORD SALISBURY—I have long thought of writing to you. In truth matter comes upon one so thickly every day that explanation will be impossible if longer delayed, and I feel that even now it will be difficult to explain to one not an actor in the scene all that has occurred in the last few months. It can be understood only by never losing sight of the different epochs at which the various events occurred.

"I think that the potatoe disease had occurred, and apprehensions of the consequences were seriously felt, before you quitted Walmer Castle. I never felt those apprehensions, and I believe that your feelings were very much the same! This however was not the feeling of others! In the end of October and beginning of November great apprehensions were entertained of the consequences of this disease that famine might prevail in Ireland within a year from the time and that, it was necessary without loss of time to consider of the measures which it should be necessary to adopt. As for me I never doubted of the terrible sentence which would be produced in Ireland by the potatoe disease not from the want of food, because there was abundance of food of other descriptions, the produce of last year's harvest in Ireland as well as in England and Scotland, and in granaries a supply for more than a year's consumption of all descriptions of grain. In the difficulty I rested upon the social habits of nearly the whole of the lower class of the Irish population to rely each for his own family the poor were what I call self-reliant, and paying the rent of the land out of what growth was left to

raised and by mortgaging his labour for months or even a year, A.D. 1816  
 left each of them without food, without money, or the facility  
 of earning it by his labour, already mortgaged, to enable him to  
 buy food in the market, however plentiful it should be! That  
 which was required for Ireland was the organisation of means to  
 find employment for those in want of food. This, it is true, was  
 likely to be expensive, but still practicable, and there was  
 nothing which apparently required any augmentation of the  
 quantity of food in the country, excepting possibly in one article  
 —maize—which might have been substituted in some cases for  
 potatoes. The first determination of the Government was to  
 wait and see what the nature and extent of the disease was, to  
 prorogue Parliament till the 16th December, and afterwards  
 to consider of the course to be taken. The Cabinet accordingly  
 met again early in December, but the alarm appeared rather to  
 have increased. It was thought by some that even the measures  
 recommended to be adopted in Ireland with a view to apply a  
 remedy to the peculiar local evil there existing, would occasion  
 additional resistance to the Corn Laws, that a reconsideration  
 of them would at all events be necessary, and certain relaxation  
 the consequence. The majority of the members of the Cabinet  
 was of a different opinion. But the most influential, particularly  
 in the House of Commons, felt strongly the necessity of making  
 an alteration.

“After several discussions it was found, that the adoption of a  
 plan upon which all should agree was hopeless, and, after full  
 consideration, it was felt that the most advantageous plan of  
 proceeding for the Queen’s service, for Her Majesty personally,  
 and for the landed interests in general, was that the Minister  
 should inform Her Majesty that, finding he could not go into  
 the House of Commons and propose a plan with the consent of  
 his colleagues, he recommended to Her Majesty to consider of the  
 formation of another administration. This communication was  
 made on Saturday the 6th of December, on which day H. M. sent  
 for Lord John Russell. The Ministers attended H. M. Council  
 at Osborne on Wednesday the 10th December and Parliament  
 was further prorogued to the 31st December, and from that day  
 forward H. M. servants continued in office only till a new

Mr. A. administration should be formed. Lord John Russell saw H. M. either on Wednesday the 10th or Thursday the 11th, undertook the commission of forming an administration, and continued his efforts to form one till Saturday the 20th, on which day he resigned the commission. I beg you to bear in mind all these dates, as they are important.

"During the interval between the 10th and 20th December those members of the Cabinet who had objected to the plan proposed by the minister were required to state whether they or any of them, were prepared or disposed to form an administration on the principle of maintaining the corn laws as they are. I, and I believe all, answered that they were not and I may add that, however much we read and hear of protection, we have never heard of any individual approaching the Queen with the advice that she should form an administration on that principle.

"When Lord John resigned his commission on the 20th December, H. M. sent for Sir Robert Peel, and before he went he wrote to me and informed me that if the Queen should desire it he would resume his office, and, even if he stood alone, would, as Her Majesty's minister enable H. M. to meet her Parliament rather than that Her Majesty should be reduced to the necessity of taking for her minister a member of the League or those connected with its politics. As soon as I heard of this determination I applauded it and declared my determination to co-operate in the execution. The question was not then to be considered what the corn law should be but whether the Queen should have a Government, and I felt then bound to stand by the Sovereign as I had done in 1831. At the same time I saw very clearly that the result of what had happened made a great alteration in the position of the question of the Corn Laws.

"As soon as Lord John Russell undertook on the 10th or 11th December to form an administration for the Queen, he was entitled to demand and he obtained, a knowledge of the contents of the dissolution of the preceding administration and the reasons assigned with the opinions of Sir Robert Peel and the difference between his administration and that of the late Government (the late Mr. Peel) that Sir Robert Peel can no longer go to Parliament as the defender of the corn law.

"The members of the Cabinet likewise who differed from ANN 1846. Sir Robert, previous (to) the 6th and 10th of December—how do they stand? They must feel that, although with numbers to vote in support of the existing corn law, they cannot reckon upon maintaining it in debate, and they must look to some other system which shall provide for the interests of the land equally with the existing law; although differing from it in the provisions which it should propose to enact.

"What I desire is, considering what has passed, the dates and facts stated, and the situation in which the Government stands at present—let the great landed proprietors and the landed interest consider well what is proposed to them, and not separate themselves from the Government till they should see, and have considered what it is. I see some of them have already loudly declared against such a course as being the same as locking the stable door after the steed should have been stolen. Be it so! If they will not adopt that reasonable, manly course, let them agree among themselves to form a Government for the Queen. Let one or more of them solicit an audience of Her Majesty, and solicit Her Majesty to select for her servants men who will maintain at all events the existing corn law! But let them prepare immediately to produce to Her Majesty the names of the persons to fill the different offices of the State, who will be responsible for carrying on the Government. If not prepared to do that, they must either support the Government of Sir Robert Peel, or be prepared to consider of the measures of one formed under the ———\* of Cobden and Co.! There can be no other course!

"I entreat you to consider of all these circumstances; the order of their concurrence, their dates, and the peculiar events in operation at the period at which each existed. And I entreat you to exert your influence over those who like yourself are great landed proprietors, and to take a course upon this occasion which will be worthy of your station, your talents and your patriotism. Don't be in a hurry, consider maturely what will be submitted for the consideration of Parliament, it can never be too late for the great landed interest to take its course.

\* Illegible in original

At 7 But if it is to take any course now excepting that of waiting to see what is proposed, it should be to solicit a commission for the formation of a Government.

"Believe me ever yours most affectionately,"

"WELLINGTON"

Peel pro-  
poses to  
repeal the  
Corn  
Laws.

The omens were adverse to the resuscitated Peel Cabinet. In the elections consequent on the redistribution of Government posts, Ministerialists suffered defeat in the southern constituencies at the hands of Protectionist candidates while electors in the north returned Whigs or Radicals. Not the less boldly did Peel face Parliament when it assembled on 22nd January 1846 and explained the situation as one which could only be relieved by the repeal of the Corn Laws. Then, in truth, the country party knew that impious hands had been laid on the Ark of the Covenant, mutely they listened to their doom—mutely because it transcended the power of any of them to confute Peel's well marshalled arguments, or deny the urgency of the situation created by the failure of potatoes in Ireland—mutely save for the vehemence of Lord George Bentinck and the virulence of Benjamin Disraeli against "the sublime audacity" of the minister who had just avowed his abandonment of the position entrusted to his defence. Almost mutely therefore but if country gentlemen could no longer eloquently vote, it was clear they had the destiny of the Administration in their hands—equally clear that there was no place for mercy in their hearts. The Protectionists cringed themselves into what would have been turned a "cave" under the heel of Lord George Bentinck and Benjamin Disraeli.

a contest with the other servants of the Crown. In conversation with Lord Stanley, who had been raised to the peerage, he explained his own situation, and made the remarkable proposal that Stanley should succeed him as leader of the Conservative party in the Lords. It was a remarkable proposal, not because Stanley was not the ablest man for the task, but because he had seceded from the Cabinet on the very point of policy which seemed about to be fatal to Peel's Government. It was a remarkable proposal, therefore, as remarkable as it would have been had Mr. Gladstone, foreseeing defeat on his Home Rule Bill in 1886, retired from the leadership and invited the Marquess of Hartington to take his place. A few extracts from correspondence well illustrate the peculiar situation.

ANN 1846  
His offer  
to Lord  
Stanley

*Lord Stanley to the Duke of Wellington.*

"18th February, 1846

"... We cannot disguise from ourselves that the unfortunate measure now under consideration has, for the time at least, completely dislocated and shattered the great Conservative party in both Houses, and that the sacrifice of your own private opinion which you and others have made for the purpose of keeping it together, has failed, as I feared it would, to effect your object. . . I think it very doubtful whether even your great name and influence will induce the Lords to sanction the Bill. . . . I am obliged to add frankly that I think confidence has been so shaken in Sir Robert Peel, that in spite of his pre-eminent abilities and great services, he can never reunite that party under his guidance. Nor do I see any one in the House of Commons of sufficient ability and influence to do so. . . In the House of Lords the case is widely different. There, your influence and authority are, and must be, paramount, and much as many of your followers may regret the course which a sense of duty has led you to take on this occasion, they still regard you with undiminished personal respect and attachment, and will follow no other leader, if any were ill-judged enough to set himself up in opposition to you. . . . When, with that disregard

recommended by the Crown and sent up by the Commons would not be rejected because "without the House of Commons and the Crown the House of Lords could do nothing" "Privilege!" muttered some, who relished not the introduction of the Sovereign's authority as an argument but Stanley had expressed no empty compliment when he told the Duke he was paramount for he carried the power with him. I am aware," he said in the course of his speech, "that I address your lordships with all your prejudices against me. I never had any claim to the confidence that your lordships have placed in me. But I will not omit" he continued in faltering accents "even on this night, possibly the last on which I shall ever venture to address to you my advice. I will not omit to counsel you as to the vote you should give on this occasion. I did think, my lords, that the formation of a Government in which Her Majesty would have confidence was of greater importance than any opinion of any individual upon the Corn Law or any other law." Their lordships listened, unconvinced and in a spirit, many of them but as little disposed to disobey the order to retire from the position pronounced untenable by their chief as any general of division to hesitate on receiving the command to retreat from Talavera. They departed at half past four in the morning and gave Ministers a victory off by even.

Ex. 76  
The Corn  
Bill passes  
the Lords

"God bless you Duke!" cried one of a small crowd of early wakeners who gathered round the door of the House of Lords on the summer morning, and the rest began to cheer.

"For Heaven's sake people let me go on my business!" said the Duke as only a few men would be in any case who would have given him a warm welcome.

The Lords gave the Bill a third reading on 3rd June and it was carried, but on that very day Lord Brougham moved for a Committee of the House of Commons to be appointed to inquire into the state of the law relating to the Corn Trade.

As a result of this motion the House of Commons resolved to appoint a Committee to inquire into the state of the law relating to the Corn Trade.



FIELD-MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON,  
c 1846

(From a *Signature at Apsley House*)\*

PLATE 100





to the more sanguine sentiment the field was lost, but at ANN 1846 any rate there should be retribution for those who had betrayed it" Sir Robert Peel must be turned out, and his enemies were not squeamish about the means to be employed for the purpose. Early in the session the Government had introduced a Coercion Bill for Ireland, one of that long and doleful series of temporary measures for the repression of recurrent outbreaks of violence which it fell to successive ministries to propose, until Lord Salisbury had the hardihood in 1887 to place a permanent measure on the statute book. The Whig opposition led by Lord John Russell, and the Combination against the Government Conservative *frondeurs* guided by Lord George Bentinck, were both deeply committed to support of the Government Bill, but no scruples restrained them from a change of front. Lord George advised his followers to "kick out the Bill and her Majesty's Ministers with it," and Russell announced his intention to go into the "No" lobby "on grounds satisfactory to himself." It may easily be imagined how indignant was the Duke at conduct so different from the principle he always followed. "If I was in your position," he wrote to Peel, "I would not allow this blackguard combination to break up the Government. I would prefer to dissolve the Parliament, and if your Government is to fall, it will at least fall with honour." \* Peel did not fancy an appeal to the country on an Irish question, and on the same day that the Corn Bill passed the Lords, Ministers were placed in a minority of seventy-three on the second reading of the Coercion Bill and resigned office.

Lord John Russell, having been commissioned to form a The Duke declines a coalition Government, approached the Duke of Wellington with the view of obtaining the services and support of some of the Peelites. The Duke told him that, although he had always been willing to give every professional assistance to the Government of the day, whatever had been its politics, he would have nothing to do with a coalition of parties, because

\* *Peel Letters*, iii. 353

Et 77 ' such arrangements were viewed with distrust by the public, were not creditable to the Parties and could not be useful to any \* On the other hand, he assured Lord John, and also members of the Conservative party who sought his advice, that, so long as he held the office of Commander-in-Chief, he could not act in concert with any party opposed to the Government. Similar overtures on the part of Lord John were declined by Lord Dalhousie, Lord Lincoln, and Mr Sidney Herbert.

## APPENDIX G

### *The Duke's Principles in Opposition.*

In order to throw as much light as possible upon the principles of the Duke's conduct in opposition it may be well to give an extract from his correspondence with Lord Londonderry, the most active *frondeur* in the House of Lords at this period.

July 7 1815.

" From the commencement of Sir Robert Peel's Gov<sup>t</sup> until he resigned it, I have been the person charged by the Queen's command to represent in the House of Lords the conduct of the Affairs of the Queen's Government in that House. As a friend of Sir Robert Peel's, you was in constant relation with me, setting aside all other causes for the same. Sir Robert Peel's Gov<sup>t</sup> is now broken up and since I stated the fact to the House of Lords I have had no communication with him to enable me to form an opinion what course he proposed to take in Parliament, or in what relation I stand to the existing Administration, or what course he would wish his friends to take in either House of Parliament. And I add that if I had received such information, I should not, and indeed I could not have acted on it myself nor could I have endeavoured to influence the conduct of others, the friends of his Administration when in power

"The inclosed paper will shew you the Professional Position ANN 1816. in which I stand, and will give you the Relation of the circumstances which have placed me in it, and will define the exact political position in which I am placed. I communicate it to you *confidentially*.

"You will see from that the position I filled heretofore. What it may have been, and (be) the existing state of Affairs what they may, I can take but one course—that of avoiding to act in concert with any political Party in opposition to the Govt . . . This anomalous position is the result of my peculiar relations with the Sovereign of this Country on account of Services for Years, and the great Rewards and Favors I have received "

Of the confidential paper referred to, the following are the most important passages -

*Memorandum on the Conservative Leadership in the House of Commons*

" . . Bygone circumstances have placed me in a situation which renders it impossible for me to act with a party in Parliament; but I have always been sensible of the advantage and even necessity for the sake of Government itself of keeping together the Conservative party, and most particularly when sitting in the Queen's councils I have endeavoured to attain that object I stand thus at the present moment—the Queen having called upon me to give her Majesty the advantage of my professional assistance in the command of the Army, I told her Majesty that I could not become a member of her councils nor have anything to say to the political — under existing circumstances, but that I would serve under those who should be her Majesty's servants, and that I felt in taking that course that I ought to cease to act in concert in Parliament with any political party in opposition to the Government, I have acted accordingly, but this course does not prevent my seeing the advantage to the publick interests, and principally to the Crown itself, of the strength and consolidation of the Conservative party in the State I am most anxious for Lord Stanley's success My position is certainly anomalous, and I can feel

Æt 77 myself liable to be misunderstood. But even when I was sitting in the House of Lords as leader of the Opposition against the Government of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, these same feelings in favour of Government *qua* Government have induced me personally to interfere to support the Government, in opposition to the party in Parliament with which I was acting when I thought it was going too far."

## APPENDIX H

### *National Defence.*

No reflection has been cast so frequently on the Duke of Wellington's public acts none has been refuted more feebly, than that, after he took to political life, he allowed the cares of office to quench his active interest in the army and to lull his vigilance about national defence. The unprepared state of the British land forces when the long peace was broken by the outbreak of war with Russia in 1854 and the suffering and loss entailed thereby on the British army in the Crimea, have been cited as the result of actual laches on the part of him who was so long responsible as Commander-in-chief. That there had occurred a terrible degree of disorganisation—that the sword of England had been allowed to rust in its scabbard—no one will deny, and this seems a fitting place to inquire how far the Duke must be held answerable for allowing this to come about because it was in August, 1842, that he became once more Commander-in-chief in succession to Lord Hill, who had become exceedingly infirm.\* The Duke's own inclination in resuming the command-in-chief was to leave the Cabinet, partly because of the disability of his deafness and partly because of his unwillingness to impart anything of a party character to the administration of the army. But he yielded to the warm remonstrance of

Lord Hill died 10th December 1842.

So Robert Peel, actuated not a little by a wish to avoid all ANN 1838. suspicion that, had he quitted the Cabinet, he had done so on account of any disapproval of its policy \*

The Duke's anxiety regarding the weakening of the national defences had been expressed long before his return to the Horse Guards in 1842. In 1827, when the Treasury was pressing for reductions in the peace establishment of the army, the Duke submitted to Lord Goderich a long memorandum which he had prepared three years before at the instance of Lord Palmerston. In this, although he expressed the opinion that steam power could never be applied to ships of war, he considered that its application to transports "would give a certainty to the movements of an expedition which such expeditions have never had before, and is well deserving the consideration of the Government in the discussion of all questions of military establishment and defence"†. He protested against the false economy of reductions at the expense of efficiency, and held strongly that *any* reduction must be followed by hasty augmentation.

At no time during the present century have the British land forces been at such a low ebb as during the reign of William IV., and the danger continued to weigh on the Duke's mind, although during the stormy period of Catholic Emancipation and Reform he could not get Ministers to give attention to the subject.

*The Duke of Wellington to Sir Willoughby Gordon*

"Stratfieldsaye, 11th December, 1838

" . . . As for my part, I have always been of opinion that nothing would enable us to settle our affairs in a short space of time, or at all (because if we don't settle them in a short space of time we shall not settle them at all), excepting to convince the World that we were in earnest in our intentions to settle them by making a real efficient augmentation of both Army and Navy, so as to meet all difficulties and opposition as a great

\* Peel Letters, II 537

† Civil Despatches, IV 114.

At 7 myself liable to be misunderstood. But even when I was sitting in the House of Lords as leader of the Opposition against the Government of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, there were feelings in favour of Government *qua* Government have led me personally to interfere to support the Government, in opposition to the party in Parliament with which I was acting when I thought it was going too far."

## APPENDIX II

### *National Defence*

No reflection has been cast so frequently on the Duke of Wellington's public acts none has been refuted more forcibly than that, after he took to political life he allowed the care of office to quench his active interest in the army and to let his vigilance about national defence. The unprepared state of the British land forces when the long peace was broken by the outbreak of war with Russia in 1854 and the sufferings and loss entailed thereby on the British army in the Crimea have been cited as the result of actual neglect on the part of him who was so long responsible as Commander-in-Chief. That there had occurred a terrible degree of disorganisation—that the sword of England had been allowed to rust in its scabbard—no one will deny and this seems a fair ground to inquire how far the Duke can be held answerable for allowing this to come about because I was in America 1841-42, that he became once more Commander-in-Chief in 1845 and to Lord Hill, who had become exceedingly lame. The Duke, even in relation to resuming the command, was to leave the Cabinet partly because of ill health and partly because of his desire to keep himself clear of any party character to the advantage of the army. But he stepped in the water at the very

See Robert Peel, actuated not a little by a wish to avoid all suspicion that, had he quitted the Cabinet, he had done so on account of any disapproval of its policy.\*

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" . . . As for my part, I have always been of opinion that nothing would enable us to settle our affairs in a short space of time, or at all (because if we don't settle them in a short space of time we shall not settle them at all), excepting to convince the World that we were in earnest in our intentions to settle them by making a real efficient augmentation of both Army and Navy, so as to meet all difficulties and opposition as a great

\* Peel Letters, ii 537

† Civil Despatches, iv 114.



At 73 Nation ought. Instead of *drubbing* as we are we ought to augment all the depots in this Country and in Ireland to 200 Men each. This augmentation would give you an early Command of some Thousands. It would cost but little more than the Pay of the Men and would be a real efficient Measure. It would be followed by no expense thereafter. It would convince friends and Enemies that we intend to be Master in Canada. I for one do not now believe that that is the Intention of all in the Cabinet. There ought to be corresponding and permanent augmentation of the Navy which I am positively certain is not adequate in Strength to the Wants for its Service.

"We should really look seriously at our Position and take steps to make our Enemies feel that we are determined to maintain it. In this Denomination I am sorry to say that I consider the whole World. With the exception possibly of some in the Austrian Government, we have not a Friend left in the World. I ought to add to this Letter that there should be a corresponding augmentation of the dismounted Men of the Cavalry."

27th December

The state of our military force is very dismaying. The Government will not—they dare not—look our difficulties in the face and provide for them. I don't believe that any Government that could be formed in these days would have the power.

Coming on to the year 1814 Wellington is found at Peel to deal with the defenceless state of British America and the dangers of invasion "aggravated beyond all calculation by the power of steam navigation is threatened, and it is to maintain us here and the known progress of our naval and military force in this perilous situation of the Atlantic, that all the Administrations since the peace of 1814 are to blame for the state of neglect of which we are now and have been a long while the victims of. It is a sad state of affairs the more so as the difficulty of obtaining the necessary resources is a constant reminder of the inevitable state of the case which would be the result of a

to foreign nations, the helplessness of Great Britain against ANN 1845 attack and invite their cupidity; but he adds, "we shall do no good by shutting our eyes to the danger"

Time went on; nothing or little was done, and the Duke's uneasiness increased. The attitude of France had become distinctly menacing. In 1845, on the part of the Opposition Lord Palmerston and Sir Charles Napier charged the Government with allowing the national defences to decay. Peel, in defending his colleagues, and concerned that the weakness of the nation should be published abroad, expressed himself in terms so optimistic that the Duke determined he should know the truth. He therefore addressed to Sir Robert a letter which he had at first intended to send to Lord Stanley as War Minister, containing a complete scheme of defence by the land forces, including the organisation of the Militia, and requests that naval officers should be desired to explain what the movements and disposition of the fleet should be if war broke out. On the precise recommendations made it is unnecessary to dwell at this time, to show the earnestness of the warning a few passages may be cited.

"I sincerely wish that I could prevail upon you to consider calmly this great and important subject, compared with which all other interests of the country are mere trifles. All admit the great change made in the system of maritime warfare. Lord Palmerston and you call it a bridge across the Channel between France and this country. I say it is rather a multitude of bridges, from a base in France extending from Bordeaux to Dunkirk. Her Majesty's dominions are in a situation for defence worse than that of the frontier in any State of Europe contiguous to France every port open to attack, for the defence of which we have not one disposable soldier, and we must depend for our safety upon the operation of our fleets. . . . I put the hypothetical case of the enemy landing 25,000 men near one of our great naval arsenals, attacking, succeeding in taking, and destroying the arsenal. This hypothesis is not the representation of an impossibility, or even extravagant, considering what I have seen



the professional opinion of a certain admiral whom he quotes ANN 1816  
 "that Gibraltar was impregnable, if the officers of engineers  
 did not spoil it" \*

On the fall of the Peel Administration in 1846 the Duke addressed to Lord John Russell, as head of the new government, a strong memorandum on the necessity for strengthening the defensive forces † Finally, in 1847, came his famous letter to Sir John Burgoyne, which is too long to insert at length, and, besides, immediately found its way into print, much to its writer's disgust ‡ Nevertheless, of such vital and present importance is the subject to the people of these islands that some of its paragraphs deserve to be quoted once more

"You are aware that I have for years been sensible of the alteration produced in maritime warfare and operations by the application of steam to the propelling of ships at sea This discovery immediately exposed all parts of the coasts of those islands which a vessel could approach at all, to be approached at all times of tide, and in all seasons, by vessels so propelled, from all quarters We are, in fact, assailable, and at least liable to insult, and to have contributions levied upon us, on all parts of our coast, that is, the coast of these (islands), including the Channel islands, which to this time, from the period of the Norman conquest, have never been successfully invaded I have in vain endeavoured to awaken the attention of different administrations to this state of things, as well known to our neighbours (rivals in power, at least former adversaries and enemies) as it is to ourselves . We hear a great deal of the spirit of the people of England, for which no man entertains higher respect than I do But unorganised, un-disciplined without systematic subordination established and well understood,

\* *Apsley House MSS*

† 12th August, 1846 *Apsley House MSS*

‡ Charles Gréville (2nd series, iii 107) tells how "Lagou, a meddling zealot, who does nothing but read blue books and write letters to the *Times* and *Chronicle*," got hold of this letter and communicated it to the press, to the Duke's great indignation



could not conceive anything but evil arising out of democratic interference with affairs of state, and this is most clearly expressed in the following letter.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lady Shelley.*

"30th January, 1818

"Upon the subject of the defences of the country, I have formed and have given opinions to several administrations; but it is well known that my opinion has been that the subject would be considered with advantage by the Government alone in the first instance. The rules of procedure so require, and it is quite certain that the House of Lords, of which I am a member, is the place in which it would be least advantageous to suggest a discussion on such a subject. . . . It is well known that in the course of the last session of Parliament a discussion did take place in the House of Lords on the state of the defences of the country. Lord Ellenborough spoke, others spoke, I did not say one word! . . . I objected to the movement on the part of any, excepting the servants of the Crown, and positively declared that I would not move in it. By the diligence of Lady and Miss Burgoyne, assisted by your ladyship, the confidential letter of the Commander-in-chief of the Army to the Chief Engineer (Sir John Burgoyne) has been pretty generally circulated, and has at last been published in the newspapers! . . . Look at what is passing all over the country in consequence of the ill-timed and indiscreet measures adopted by the ladies—your ladyship, Lady and Miss Burgoyne among them, and the gossips of the world, in order to bring it under discussion. I foresaw this consequence but I must say that my principal view in desiring to keep the subject in its regular channel was that I knew it was the only efficient one, and moreover the only safe one for the public interests!"\*

In the light of later days we recognise in the "ill-timed and indiscreet measures adopted by the ladies" a real service to the country by rousing it to a sense of peril. Half a



dealt with, and when it was determined that the procession ANN 1848 should be stopped after it had moved, we agreed that the particular place where it should be stopped was purely a military question. The Duke of Wellington was requested to come to us, which he did very readily. We had then a regular Council of War, as upon the eve of a great battle. We examined maps and returns and information of the movements of the enemy. After long deliberation, plans of attack and defence were formed to meet every contingency. The quickness, intelligence, and decision which the Duke displayed were very striking, and he inspired us all with perfect confidence. It was not I alone who was struck with the consultation of yesterday. Macaulay said to me that he considered it the most interesting spectacle he had ever witnessed, and that he should remember it to his dying day."

To the Duke, then, was committed the task of stopping the procession and defending the metropolis from the irruption The Duke's precautions of a dangerous rabble. He was hard on fourscore, yet he betrayed no signs of failure either in discretion or military instinct. Injudicious display of force might easily have precipitated a bloody riot, the tragedy of Peterloo have been re-enacted on a grand scale. The London police, a force of which the Duke had first urged the creation,\* numbered nearly four thousand; the Duke determined that the mob should first encounter the civil force, and that the military should only be employed if the policemen failed. Nevertheless his arrangements were as complete as if he had been preparing defence against an army of invasion. The Guards and Household cavalry were reinforced by the 17th, 62nd, and 63rd Foot, brought in from country quarters, steam-vessels were in readiness in the river and the Channel to bring other troops if need should arise, guns were placed near Westminster Bridge and neighbourhood, with strict orders that commissioned officers only were to discharge them if necessary. The Bank of England, Somerset House, the Mint, and other public

\* See ante, p 153





of the utmost importance to the Throne and the Constitution ANN 1850  
 that the command of the Army should remain in the hands  
 of the Sovereign, and not fall into the hands of the House of  
 Commons” He saw no security, were he gone, except in the  
 Sovereign, or, as in the case of her Majesty, the Sovereign’s  
 Consort assuming the command. “It is a pleasure,” wrote  
 the Queen to Baron Stockmar in reference to this interview,  
 “and a wonder to see how powerful and how clear the mind of  
 this wonderful man is, and how loyal and kind he is to both  
 of us His loss, when it comes, will be a thoroughly irre-  
 parable one.”

The letter in which the Prince Consort gave his reasons  
 for declining the appointment has been published already\*  
 They consisted in the interference which he foresaw the  
 duties of the Command-in-chief would cause with those  
 “most important duties connected with the welfare of the  
 Sovereign . which nobody *could* perform but myself”  
 Nobody can doubt that the Prince’s decision was a wise one  
 On constitutional grounds, it is strange that the Duke declined  
 to admit the objection raised by the Prince that it was  
 undesirable to place the Sovereign or the Sovereign’s Consort  
 in such a position that it might become his duty, under  
 certain circumstances, to direct personally operations against  
 subjects of the Crown, on professional grounds it is still  
 stranger that the Duke did not perceive the disadvantage to  
 the service of placing at its head an individual without  
 military experience in the field

During the summer of 1850 the Duke sustained the loss of Death of  
Sir Robert  
Peel  
 two of his few remaining friends On 2nd July Sir Robert  
 Peel expired from injuries received in a fall from his horse on  
 Constitution Hill It has been shown that perfect harmony  
 did not always prevail between Peel and Wellington, that  
 there were intervals when, owing to misunderstanding, to the  
 Duke’s deafness, and to the impatience of a military spirit  
 with the more deliberate and circuitous courses of a politician,

\* Martin’s *Life of the Prince Consort*, ii 259

The Duke had many devices for the comfort of his guests and household, he bestowed special attention to the heating apparatus, which at one time was so powerful as nearly to cook the inmates. On the breakfast table there was a *leaper* over a hot-water jug, the Duke's own invention put in front of every third place the result not infrequently being the guests unfamiliar with the arrangement used to capsize the whole affair.

His conversation.

It was natural that in his later years younger men were eager to obtain information about a life so full of remarkable experience and the Duke was exceedingly good natured in indulging their legitimate curiosity. Lord Mahon of whom the Duke was very fond, was one of the most industrious of these and his notes have been given to the public in the shape of his well known *Conversations*. The Duke after dinner, used to sit reading the paper with a lamp on a table beside him. Lord Mahon generally contrived to get near this table, and engage him in conversation. On one evening the ladies at Strathfeldsaye thinking the Duke might be wearied with this pardonable importunate arrangement as they thought without his perceiving it a sofa and other furniture so as to bar Lord Mahon's usual access; but his lordship was not to be baffled, he managed to scale or thread the fence and presently was deep in conversation. That evening as usual, the Duke was handing the ladies their tea on candlesticks he remarked to one of them with a twinkle in his eye "Your fortifications were not very effective after all!" He had seen through the little scheme and was much amused at the ladies' strategy determined on.

His  
early  
years.

The love stories of men of rank have an interest of their own for the rest of the world but the Duke's were little to tell of in Wellington's life - the only one of them a romance. His passion for Catherine Fitz-Rois was mutual and it grew to as it was called in the Duke's own words "a perfect and perfect friendship with the love of a man and a woman." It was the only one of the kind in his life.



FRANCES MARY, FIRST WIFE OF THE 2ND MARQUIS OF SALISBURY

*(From an Engraving of the Picture at Hatfield)*

[Vol II p 375]



of duty and honour as he interpreted them—would have pronounced its *requiescat*, and no reproach could have lain against him because he bowed to the lawful opposition which had prevented his marriage. But this was a man who was never satisfied by merely fulfilling what the world exacted of him : his own conscience and sense of justice had to be at ease, be the cost what it might ; in marrying Catherine Pakenham the cost was a heavy one, but it was paid without hesitation as a just debt. Wellington's relations with other women have been the subject of endless gossip. It must be admitted that they were numerous and, with two or three notable exceptions, not of a kind on which it profits to dwell. Unlike many men who have played great parts in the world's history, Wellington never submitted his will to a woman's ; although very susceptible of the influence of beauty and wit, he treated women either as agreeable companions or as playthings. He never allowed them to control his actions, nor, with two exceptions, did he feel acute sorrow when death or other circumstances put an end to intimacy.

The two exceptions were women in whom Wellington reposed complete confidence and with whom his friendship was absolutely without reserve. With one of these—Mrs Arbuthnot—a *liaison*, if current reports are to be credited, was the means of revealing qualities in her which far outlived the fleeting influence of her physical charms \*. In the case of the other—the second Marchioness of Salisbury—no whisper of reproach was ever uttered. From first to last there existed between her and the Duke an ideally helpful friendship and *camaraderie* of common interest. Numerous references in this work to Lady Salisbury's journals and correspondence show how useful she was in smoothing away such difficulties as were created by the Duke's austere and peevish habits of command, and illustrate the solace which his lonely spirit

\* There is at Apsley House a miniature of Mrs Arbuthnot which, it is said, the Duke constantly wore round his neck, suspended by a chain of her hair. The hair is black or dark brown.



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derived from constant exchange of thought with one who thoroughly understood the world and his relations with it.

After the death of his duchess in 1831, it was natural that many rumours should get afloat of Wellington's intention to marry again, but only in one case does he seem to have entertained any apprehensions on the subject—that of the Hon. Mary Ann Jarvis daughter of the 2nd Viscount St Vincent. With this young lady he certainly had a pretty strong flirtation and the gossips made the most of it.

"The Duke," notes Lady Salisbury, "laughs extremely at the notion of his being in love with Miss Jarvis 'What is the good of being sixty-seven if one cannot speak to a young lady? He says she is mad but she has talent and intelligence, though with less powers of conversation than any educated person he ever saw' "

The flirtation went on for some years and in the end assumed a serious phase. The Duke in writing to Lady de Ros, always referred to Miss Jarvis as "the Syren."

*To Lady de Ros.*

' London, August 17, 1837 —I go to Walmer Castle on Saturday

I spoke to the Syren about coming I don't know what to do with her if you should be gone. If you should still be there, I shall be delighted to have her *Walmer Castle*  
October 7 1837 — Between Lord Lowther and me the Syren

appears on the road to get married *S S (Stratfieldsaye).*

December 3, 1837 —You may tell the Syren that I have got the clock here but am sadly in want of a clockmaker

December 10 — It is very hard upon me to be obliged to repair my clock myself! However it is done and I hope to escape being loaded with shawls! *S S January 14, 1838 —*

I am sorry to tell you the clock is broken again. The housemaid being I conclude, in a conspiracy to have it repaired, broke it during my absence, *S. S. February 11 —* I have had two or three notes from the Syren but they were about a protégé of hers for the Orphan Asylum, or about other

musick for the organ here, and the mode of execution, upon which ANN, 1838  
 subject I have five sheets of paper which poor Gerald \* and Miss  
 Walmsley are to read . *S. Saye, February 25.*— . . I have not

heard, from the Syren lately. I don't think it necessary to consult  
 Buzfuz upon any letter written as yet . . *London, March 5* —  
 . . I saw the Syren last night at Lady Salisbury's . . She was  
 looking in great force, and says she is much improved in musick,  
 and there is an organ on the tapis; but this is not so dangerous  
 as a clock, though, by-the-by, it is at the clockmaker's.

*London, May 9.*— . . I am afraid that the concert, instead of  
 costing 19 guineas, will give us a deal of trouble She came to  
 town from S. S. and, contrary to my intentions and request,  
 settled a programme with Mr. Knivett. I have been under the  
 necessity of altering it, and she will come up in a fury, and I shall  
 have to ask pardon This, to be sure, is very dangerous . I  
 will let you know if the concert should produce any *extraordinary*  
*esclandre*! . . . *May 31* —I dined with the Syren last week It  
 was the day of the Queen's ball, and I returned from thence to  
 the musick, but Lady Jersey was there and talked so much that  
 she was interrupted I therefore came away . I hope that  
 I shall not get into any scrape to render necessary my giving  
 a retainer to the great lawyers in such cases . *August 13* —

I have presented a pianoforte in exchange for the old  
 Walrper one, which I am going to hear on Sunday evening  
 This will give Rogers† fresh food for jokes, but I enjoy them  
 myself as much as I do H B's caricatures *August 11* —

I should like to see the Syren married to Lord Lowther or any-  
 body excepting myself—God bless her! I cannot conceive how  
 she came to think of me, I am old enough to be her great-grand-  
 father I am going to give her a crown for singing the trio in  
 the Cenerentola (?), mind—not a coronet! Louis Philippe gave  
 her a crown for being the best dancer in the school at Paris; I  
 give her one for singing a trio single-handed . ”

In a subsequent letter the Duke expresses his dismay at  
 the Syren having taken up her quarters in Walher village,

• \* The Duke's nephew, rector of Strathfieldsaye, afterwards Dean of Windsor  
 , † Samuel Rogers the poet

attend a meeting of the Privy Council. He was exceedingly indignant and communicated his complaint to Mr Macgregor chairman of the company. Nothing more is known of the incident except this, that immediately afterwards young Kendall was appointed to a clerkship in Mr Macgregor's bank at Liverpool, after which he was transferred to the Ordnance Department in Ireland. The presumption is fair that the Duke supplemented his income during the early years of his clerkship which is always insisted upon in a bank, and which must have been far beyond the means of his father to do

The Duke's  
personal  
habits.

It is natural that those who apprehend the magnitude of the work accomplished in a single lifetime, and the almost invariable success of every enterprise undertaken therein, should endeavour to ascertain the means by which such results were attained. A strong will, extraordinary clearness of decision and tenacity of purpose, a vigorous frame, abstemious habits keen common sense, powerful interest at the outset—all these we recognise, but of such Wellington enjoyed no monopoly. Goethe's prescription for becoming great he followed also as every great man has followed it unconsciously

Wer groeßes will muss sich zusammenraffen  
In der bechränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister

But what was the secret economy which enabled him so to use these means as to make himself for nearly half a century the most conspicuous man in Europe? In truth one part of it was a habit so simple, so homely that one runs perilously near bathos in defining it. Arthur Wesley was born in that rank of life the members of which usually wait to begin their daily amusements or business till the world has been aired and warmed for them, till carpets have been swept, moraines, papers laid out and a variety of other trivial offices performed, the sum of which insensibly becomes essential—what most of us set greatest store by—comfort. To secure

this, well-to-do people are generally content to surrender to the majority of their fellow-creatures a start of about three hours in each day—a sacrifice confirmed into invincible habit by the accumulated sanction of generations. The world at large loses nothing by lazy people lying in bed, idle folk out of the way are at least out of mischief. But Wellington, setting no store by comfort, knew that to get through his work would take all the time he could give to it—he rose at six every morning, thereby adding three hours to each working day. Think what this daily increment amounted to, reckoning from the time he went to India, for there is no evidence to show that he practised early rising before that period. Three hours a day for fifty-five years (allowing for leap years) amount to 61,359 hours—2,556 days—almost exactly seven years of wakefulness and, constituted as he was, of activity, filched from fashion and added to his life—undoubtedly a large factor in the volume of his life-work, even if the quality thereof be attributed entirely to his intellectual powers. The greater part of those wonderful despatches, much also of his private correspondence, was penned before most of the writer's friends had left their breakfast tables. Here is the secret of his command of leisure for hunting in the Peninsula, for parties and balls, which he attended so regularly, for constant presence when the House of Lords was sitting.

It may be urged that few men have strength to sustain such long days and short nights. Perhaps so, but how many of us have tested our powers systematically—how many have tried resolutely to acquire the practice of compressing sleep into six hours out of the twenty-four, recouping ourselves at odd moments, such as Wellington's snatches of slumber between the acts at Talavera and Salamanca or on the way-side at Quatre-Bras? Those who should break down under this training could never remain seventeen hours and a half in the saddle, as Wellington did at Waterloo, his mind all the time being filled with work of such poignant and

82. Both Prince Albert and the Duke of Wellington perceived that the scheme was miserably inadequate it was a beginning, however in the right direction, and was duly embodied in a bill. But there was a lion in the path. In the previous December Lord John Russell had been under the disagreeable necessity of conveying to Lord Palmerston the Queen's desire that he should surrender the seals of the Foreign Office, in consequence of his indiscretion in expressing approval of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*. Palmerston, therefore, quitted the Cabinet, and soon appeared as an enemy on the flank of his ancient colleagues. On 20th February 1852 he persuaded the House of Commons to reject the Militia Bill by a majority of eleven votes and the following day Ministers resigned. Lord Stanley who had become Earl of Derby in June, 1851, on the death of his father undertook to form a Government, which, as the Peelites still held aloof was in a hopeless minority in the House of Commons. Except Lord Malmesbury who took the Foreign Office, and Mr Darnley, who entered office for the first time as Chancellor of the Exchequer the new Ministry was composed of men untried and unknown. It derived its distinctive name from a conversation between the Duke and the Prime Minister in the House of Lords. The Duke was eagerly inquiring of Lord Derby the names of his new colleagues some of which he had never heard before. "Who? who?" he asked repeatedly and the "Who-who?" Ministry was a name that stuck to the Cabinet throughout its brief existence.

The Duke  
and the  
Militia.

Brief as that existence was, for it survived the July elections only a few weeks, it succeeded in framing and carrying a Militia Bill which met the Duke's requirements more fully than the rejected measure thereby laying the foundation of the existing organisation of auxiliary land forces. It was in support of this measure that the Duke of Wellington made his last speech in the House of Lords. The Militia of the United Kingdom have had to pass through a good deal of official di-

soldiers recognise how fully the force has justified the Duke's ANN<sup>1</sup> 1852.  
forecast of their value " " "

"Take the battle of Waterloo look at the number of British troops at that battle I can tell your lordships that in that battle there were sixteen battalions of Hanoverian Militia just formed, under the command of a nobleman, late the Hanoverian Ambassador here, Count Kielmansegge, who behaved most admirably . . . I say, my lords, that however much I admire highly disciplined troops, and most especially British disciplined troops, I tell you you must not suppose that others cannot become so too, and no doubt if you begin with the formation of militia corps under this Act of Parliament, they will in time become what their predecessors in the militia were and if ever they do become what their predecessors in the militia were, you may rely on it they will perform all the services they may be required to perform My lords, I recommend you to adopt this measure as the commencement of a completion of a peace establishment. It will give you a constitutional force it may not be at first, or for some time, everything we could desire, but by degrees it will become what you want, an efficient auxiliary force to the regular army "

Brief as was the life of the Derby Ministry, it outlasted the days of him whom Disraeli aptly described as "the sovereign master of duty" On Monday, 13th September, the Duke was in excellent health and spirits, took a walk through the grounds of Walmer Castle, entered his stable and spoke to his groom about the horses On returning to the castle he wrote a note to his niece, Lady Westmorland, telling her that he would meet her at six o'clock the following evening on her arrival at Dover He dined in company with his son and daughter-in-law, Lord and Lady Charles Wellesley, and went to bed about ten o'clock His servant called him next morning shortly after six, but the Duke did not rise at once as was

A week later he moved for a return of the troops carried in the ill-fated Birkenhead transport

Æt 83. and radiant with glory—*Stilichonis apex, et cognita fulsit  
cantice!*"\*

Several years before, the following lines had appeared in  
the *Morning Post* over the signature of B. Disraeli —

*"To the Duke of Wellington.*

"Not only that thy puissant arm could bind  
The tyrant of a world, and, conquering fate,  
Enfranchise Europe, do I deem thee great,  
But that in all thy actions do I find  
Exact propriety no gusts of mind  
Fitful and wild, but that continuous state  
Of ordered impulse mariners await  
In some benignant and enriching wind  
The breath ordained by Nature. Thy calm mien  
Recalls old Rome, as much as thy high deed;  
Duty thine only idol, and serene  
When all are troubled, in the utmost need  
Prescient, thy country's servant over soon,  
Yet sovereign of thyself whate'er may speed."

\* Claudian's allusion to Stilicho's abundant white hair

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